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RALPH A. FELTON

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SECTION I

The Church in the Rural World

CHAPTER 1

OUR RURAL WORLD



Although many North Americans are urban dwelling, much of the rest of the world is rural. For this reason the problems common to agricultural peoples can really be said to be world problems. One of these generally-shared problems is hunger. Most of the world is hungry most of the time. Let us take a look at this problem, at some of its causes, and at some hopeful possibilities.

World Hunger

Each year when American farmers discuss what to do with their huge surplus food crops, they should be helped to remember that two-thirds of the world goes to bed hungry every night. Only one-sixth of the world is well-fed according to a report by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. Untold millions are starving.

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WE HAVE PLENTY OF LAND

As we look at this world of ours, we find that 71 per cent of its surface is ocean and only 29 per cent is land. This land area contains 56 million square miles of natural forests and grassy plains, both of which can be cultivated, as well as mountains and deserts that can not be cultivated by our present methods.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture reports that there are 16 billion acres that could be farmed, but the world is cultivating only 2 billion acres now. This is because much of the world has not yet learned the simple elements of efficient agriculture. Proper use of available land would provide almost eight acres per person, although food authorities state that a two acre average would be sufficient to feed the world, if scientific cultivation were practiced.¹

In addition to inefficient methods of agriculture, other factors affecting the occurrence of hunger in the world are the distribution of available land, and the ratio between population and land productivity. Asia, for example, contains only one-third of the land surface of the world, but it has two-thirds of the world's population. Poor use of the land that it does have increases the seriousness of Asia's hunger problem. Some dimensions of that problem can be seen most typically in the Indian sub-continent.

¹ de Castro, Josue. *The Geography of Hunger*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1952. This book by the chairman of the Council of the F.A.O. is one of the most comprehensive studies available. It has been used as a resource for this chapter.

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INDIA AND PAKISTAN

Three out of four of the people of India and Pakistan are engaged in agriculture. But it is often an unproductive agriculture, carried on with crude tools, inadequate fertilizers, and without seed selection or pest control. It provides a bare subsistence diet for one-fifth of the world's population. Recent figures show that only about 1,900 calories are available for each person in India, and, of course, many people get much less. Nutrition experts suggest three thousand calories for a working man in an average climate.

What a typical villager eats each day in northwest India has been described by James Lal:

In the morning he drinks two or three cups of tea. About eight or nine o'clock he has a glass of buttermilk. At about twelve o'clock his wife takes his lunch to him, which he eats in the field, or at his work. It consists of millet bread with a little butter-oil on it, and a vegetable, chillies, and buttermilk. In the evening the family usually has some more millet bread with an onion. Very seldom do the villagers ever get any meat or fruit.

This picture of hunger, which could be alleviated by improved land use, is found all over the world.

AFRICA

In Africa no corner or scrap of land has escaped hunger, and in hunger and chronic malnutrition may be found one of the most decisive reasons for the lassitude common to so many of the people.

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African diet is excessive in carbohydrates and deficient in proteins, minerals, and vitamins. *Kwashiorkor*, the children's nutritional disease that is so often fatal, is found nearly everywhere. It is the biggest cause of death in children under five years of age.

When a missionary hospital is opened in Africa, its rooms are soon crowded with cases of rickets, beriberi, scurvy, and pellagra—all diseases due to malnutrition or to vitamin deficiency. Recently a British committee noted that "It is becoming generally accepted that the occurrence of leprosy is associated with a faulty diet." One cannot help but ask our Boards of Missions to send along with every doctor or nurse a second missionary who is equipped to teach these same hospital patients and their families how to raise vegetables and fruit; how to produce meat and eggs, thereby reducing the toll from these nutritional diseases.

GOOD NEIGHBORS TO THE SOUTH

If we should visit South America, our first stop would probably be Venezuela. We would find 50 per cent of the children there get no meat and 89 per cent get no eggs. We often speak of milk as being the "perfect food," by which we mean it has many of the elements the human body needs. But in Venezuela the average person drinks only 38 quarts a year. In other parts of South America the average is even lower. A person in the Amazon region of Brazil averages 8 quarts a year, in Peru 11 quarts, in Chile 14, and in Ecuador 26. Com-

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pare this to some other countries—in the U. S. the average consumption is 110 quarts, in Denmark 164, and in Switzerland 263.

Or again, let us examine the per capita consumption of meat in South America. In Ecuador it is 40 lbs. per year and in Peru 30 lbs. This is less than one-third of the 146 lbs. that an average farmer eats in the United States or Canada.

Some 250,000 tourists from the United States visit Mexico each year. They may see and possibly recognize the common dietary diseases of pellagra, beriberi, and ophthalmia. But few will know that out of every ten thousand children in rural Mexico, five thousand have some kind of dietary deficiency.

REDUCING WORLD HUNGER

In all the countries of the world where the diet is poor and unbalanced, we find the appetite is often stimulated by a strong condiment. The man who eats only rice, tapioca, or corn meal three times a day must add his pungent curry, his hot peppers, his fermented pulque, or his black coffee. This helps him get down his monotonous meal. But the stimulant does not last long and it does not make up for the lack of food elements necessary to keep the man well and active. His life is an existence without ambition or initiative. With deadening fatalism he listens to the challenging words of the evangelistic pastor, but goes on living the same old way, undernourished and without inspiration.

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This pattern is not necessary and world hunger can be stopped for agricultural needs are well-known. Simple farm tools, more fertilizer, better seeds, crop rotation, soil conservation, and insect control measures can produce great changes in most areas of the world.

The World Food Survey in India has reported that the yield of wheat there could be increased 20 per cent by the use of fertilizers, 5 per cent by better seeds, and 5 per cent by the use of insecticides. Thirty per cent is not much, but it is the difference between hunger and health. Another example of the improvement that is feasible is found in the common Newcastle disease that kills 75 to 100 per cent of the poultry of many Indian villages. This scourge might be controlled by a simple vaccine that could be administered by any village leader, the rural pastor perhaps. And so in every country, better agriculture and better living is possible if people are only shown how.

THE CHRISTIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY

James M. Carr, in his book, *Bright Future*, says that there are 180,000 rural pulpits in the United States "Proclaiming the glorious gospel." This is most encouraging. But what are they saying about the church and hunger?

Sixty- three out of every one hundred Americans of all ages are members of some church. What does it really mean to them that two-thirds of the world's population goes to bed hungry every night?

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Jesus' last teachings dealt with our neglect of those who need us most. These are his words:

. . . for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me . . . as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me. (Matt. 25:42-43, 45.)

What shall we do? Next Sunday and every Sunday, as our church bells call us to worship, let us pray that the holiness of God may quicken our consciences when we look out upon a hungry world. Let us try to feed our mind with the truth of God and also with the truth about the great needs of hungry people in every land. Let us seek to open our hearts to the love of God, who taught us not only to love him but to love our neighbors as ourselves. Then it will be easier for us to devote our will to the purpose of God as he reveals it to us, whether it means giving our lives or our money or both to his great Church. Then we may listen to his words, ". . . as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me." (Matt. 25:40.)

The Land on Which We Live

When the early settlers landed in North America, they were in search of freedom. Little did they realize, however, that our natural resources help to make us free. When they landed on the Atlantic Coast, the average depth of the topsoil in America was said to be nine

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inches. It had taken from a few hundred years to thousands of years to make each inch of it. This soil was practically the only capital our forefathers had. And this layer of topsoil, even today, is our nation's bank account. If we rob this bank, we rob ourselves and steal from our children.

The early American settlers cut and burned the timber and wore out the soil. They heroically carved a nation out of the wilderness and have been carving at it almost ever since. They gloried in their straight furrows. They thought they did not have time for contour cultivation or strip cropping, or perhaps they did not know how to save their soil in those days. We have sometimes wrongly called this exploitation of natural resources "the spirit of the pioneers." Most American farmers now admit that it was a mistake.

In the South men made cotton "king" and moved from one hillside to the next, becoming the nation's number one gullymakers. Even today as one goes through our southeastern states, he sees abandoned fields, gashed and ugly, grown up with piney scrub, which is Nature's way of rebuilding the soil that man has destroyed.

AMERICAN DUST BOWL

In 1861 the Homestead Act was passed in America, giving free land to every family that would develop a "claim." Thus was ushered in the era of the covered wagon, the circuit rider, and the settlement of the Midwest.

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World War I skyrocketed the price of grain, and in the Middle West men plowed up the grassland to plant it to wheat. They bought more land by mortgaging what they had, then planted it in more wheat to pay off the mortgage. They burned the straw that should have been plowed under to build up the soil—but they could not burn the mortgage.

Then came the American drought of 1934. On May 11, 1934, people were startled with what seemed like a miracle. The sun stopped shining in the middle of the day. Day turned to night. Lights went on. Cattle came to the barn, and chickens went to roost. Dust clouds choked the air. Roads were blocked. Dust banks covered the fence rows. This darkness was not a miracle at all; it was the land—our land—crying from its wounds, calling for water, for care, for protection. The earth had revolted. Eastern magazines sent photographers out West to take pictures of our dust storms. The sins we had committed against the land were spread upon newspaper front pages like crime stories or bank robberies. Such they were. Losses from our sins against the soil amounted to the loot from many bank robberies.

The United States has surpassed every other civilized nation in the world in soil exploitation. Fifty million acres of once fertile crop land have been destroyed and largely abandoned. Another fifty million acres are in the process of abandonment, and a hundred million acres of crop land have lost, through erosion, from 25 to 75 per cent of their top soil. These two hundred million acres, properly used,

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would feed, clothe, and shelter sixty million people. Thus we have squandered our soil resources because we have failed to recognize that "the earth is the Lord's."

Hitherto in the United States we have been wasteful with our land because we could escape from the worn-out land by migration to new lands. But now we have reached our last frontier. This means proper cultivation—terracing, contouring, strip farming; use of organic matter, grass, crop rotation, fertilizer, legumes; drainage of the land if the land is too wet; irrigation if it is too dry; and dams to retain and distribute water resources properly.¹

AMERICAN SOIL CONSERVATION BEGUN

When America woke up she found that she had ruined or damaged some 300 million acres of farm land—an area as large as the states of Texas, California, and Washington combined. More than half of the Great Plains was seriously affected by the erosion of wind or water. Finally individuals and organizations began to heed the cry of the land.

In 1937 the first state district conservation law was passed. By 1957 there were 2,763 soil conservation districts covering more than a million farms and more than 300 million acres. It is estimated that 91 per cent of all farms and ranches are now included in such a program.

Farmers and ranchers in the ten Great Plains States have planned conservation treatment for 171 million acres and are applying these measures as rapidly as pos-

¹ Randolph, H. S. and Maloney, Alice. *A Manual for Town and Country Churches*. New York: Presbyterian Board of National Missions, 1950, p. 8.

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sible. It has been said that the terraces or contours that they have built to hold back the soil and the water would reach from New York to San Francisco 170 times, or around the world twenty times. Farmers who believed that they could not plow except in straight rows are now farming 17 million acres on the contour in the Great Plains. They are planting cover crops that when plowed under will enrich the soil. In some states they are letting fields lie fallow on alternate years. Farmers are developing irrigation systems in the dry areas and are reforestation in many places. We in America are just learning how to conserve our soil, although most European countries have been saving their soil for years.

THE LAND PROBLEM IN BRAZIL

The farm pattern in Brazil is well-defined. The Brazilian farmer moves into an area of forest, as is all the land in the coffee belt, clears the land, burns it off, and plants his coffee. It usually takes four years before he can harvest his crop. The land produces very well for the first ten years and then it begins to decline. With fertilization and with proper care, the soil could be maintained, but the farmer moves on and starts elsewhere. This is called "gypsy farming" or "moving agriculture."

THE PROBLEM OF THE SOIL IN AFRICA

This same pattern of moving agriculture that is practiced in parts of South America is found over much of Africa. "In some cases whole villages pick up and move

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to better farming lands," observes S. Weber of the Upper Nile Mission. "But in most cases their residence does not change, only the plantation. This constant shifting of farms is due to the fact that there is no method of fertilization, except by letting the bush grow again and giving the land several years of rest."

LAND AND LIFE

There are three phases of this question of the stewardship of the soil: the physical, the social, and the religious. They are all interrelated. The physical is a matter of earth and sky and water. The social has to do with the habits and attitudes of men—whether they be greedy exploiters, or landless and uprooted, or live with knowledge and respect for the earth. The third phase is the religious. It recognizes God as the true owner of the land, which he created, and man as a steward. The religious phase of stewardship also points out man's responsibility to his children's children, who must live and use the land after him.

A great many rural churches in America today observe "Soil Stewardship Sunday." The subject of soil conservation is often presented to church audiences. The American conscience on this problem has changed completely.

In every country the way man treats his land helps to determine the quality of his rural life. Herein lies a challenge and an opportunity for the rural church around the world.

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Evolution of Farming Methods

Farm life around the world is changing. It follows fairly definite trends or stages of development. These changes are due to many things, such as the type of tools the farmer uses, the quality of seed he plants, the way he cares for his soil, the size of the farm he cultivates, the climate in which he lives, and, of course, his general knowledge of agriculture.

THE HOE FARMER

The first stage in farming in nearly every country is the hoe farmer. He cultivates his one or two acres with a hoe or a pointed stick. He may also use a machete, or big knife. The grain is carried from the field to the house on the back of the farmer's wife. She pounds or threshes it, blowing away the husks of the grain—the most valuable nutritional elements of her family's one-food meal. Hunger is a constant companion and death affords the only real escape from continuing deprivation.

THE FARMER WITH THE WOODEN PLOW

After the hoe farmer comes the man who follows his ox-drawn wooden plow. Crisscrossing his little four acre farm two or three times, he only stirs up the surface of the eroded soil. Although his methods are more advanced than the hoe farmer's, he, no more than the other, rebuilds his worn-out field by using straw or humus. Following the harvest the slow-moving feet of his muzzled

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oxen tramp out the grain on the village threshing floor. This grain makes up his starch diet for another twelve long months.

Fifty million farmers in a country like India are today following wooden plows across hot, sun-baked fields just as their fathers before them. The rice farmer in Burma or Thailand may use only one water buffalo or carabao instead of two oxen in his rice paddy, but he also gets only a stomachfull of starch.

Both the hoe farmer and the farmer with the wooden plow are limited by their tools. Their methods of cultivation wear out the land and reduce the yield. Their income is marginal at best.

Because of the high infant mortality, and the many plagues and communicable diseases, life expectancy in India is only thirty-two years; in China it is thirty-four years, or just half what it is in the United States, or in Canada, or in much of Europe. Even this is a long time to live with chronic hunger. Sickness, fear, and hunger greatly influence home and family life, and especially beliefs about the future. People who have such limited resources are easily interested in communism, which talks much about "agrarian reform," seemingly offering a hope many peoples have not known for generations.

These small scale farmers need help. They need not only food, but especially new tools, new farming techniques, new opportunities to improve their standard of living. They also need a new religion—the Christian gospel.

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THE FARMER WITH THE MOLDBOARD PLOW

The next stage is the horse-drawn moldboard plow, whose metal plate turns over the soil, instead of simply stirring it up. It also turns under the top mulch and keeps the land rich with nitrogen and other needed elements.

Following the moldboard plow, soon comes the harrow, drill, and cultivator, familiar on every American and European farm for the past seventy-five years; also the binder or harvester, and the thresher. These latter implements took the place of the old sickle and the flail and removed much of the backbreaking drudgery from farm life.

It would seem reasonable to believe that the farmers of every country could use this type of equipment, even if some of it had to be owned co-operatively.

THE TRACTOR AND MECHANIZED FARMING

Today in heavily industrialized countries, the farmer has moved up one more step in the mechanization process. During the plowing season, each of four million American tractor-drawn plows turns over about an acre per hour for ten hours a day. Combines cut and thresh the wheat and, in some cases, bale the straw, all in one operation. Corn pickers do the work of many men. There are also listers, disk tillers and subsoilers, harrows and rotary shredders, soil pulverizers and mulchers, fertilizer distributors and manure spreaders, row-crop planters and grain drills, rotary hoes and sprayers, forage harvesters and cotton-picking machines. Milking time

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is shortened by modern milking machines run by electricity. Crops are hauled to market in fast moving trucks.

A mechanized farmer comes home at night to an electrically lighted home, with a radio, a television, and many other appliances. The farmer's wife also has mechanized her housework. This process in the United States, Canada, and other industrialized countries has taken much of the drudgery out of farm life. With improved farm machinery, fewer farmers are needed to raise a nation's food supply. Those who are not needed on the farms become teachers, doctors, or industrial workers. Some farmers, because of improved machinery, find time to work in industry a part of each year, adding to their income and improving their standard of living.

The small farmer with his two or four acre farm in an overpopulated area may not be able to become a mechanized farmer as described here, but he can be helped to improve the tools he has, to get better seed and to keep his crops and animals free from disease and pests. The concern of the Christian is to help the farmers of the world move up these stages of development much faster than at present.

AN ILLUSTRATION OF CHANGES WROUGHT BY MACHINERY

The writer made a study of one county, Tompkins County, New York, to see how improved farm machinery changed the pattern of rural life. Farmers here originally planted their seed by hand and covered it by dragging tree tops over the ground, or later by using a har-

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row. Wheat was cut with a scythe. The grain was threshed till ten or eleven o'clock on moonlight nights. Boys were "farmed out" in those days, that is, sold to an employer for a period of time in order to get much-needed wages.

The mower was first used in Tompkins County in 1860, taking the place of the scythe. In 1876 the first steam thresher was used. It took twelve men to operate it, and it threshed one thousand bushels in a day. These same twelve men with flails would have threshed no more than 180 bushels in a day, or one-sixth as much.

Slow oxen gave way to the more efficient horses, then to tractors. From 1850 to 1880, the number of oxen in the county decreased from 2,739 to 333. In 1900 silos began to be used, which made it possible for the cows to get green feed throughout the year. By 1925 one farm in four in this county had a silo. This greatly increased the family income per cow.

Improved machinery brought about shorter work days, larger farms, and fewer farmers. When the boy dropped corn and the man covered it, the two of them planted only two acres a day. With a corn planter one man planted six acres a day by himself.

These farm improvements were followed by more schools, better health, richer home life, and a religious outlook that interprets religion in terms of the abundant life as Jesus described it. The improvements also helped to raise the living standards of city dwellers. Each of us should help the other in this evolving process.

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WHY AMERICAN FARMING METHODS DEVELOPED FASTER

The farmers of the United States and Canada have developed their farming methods faster than other areas, because they have had much more help. North American agriculturalists came from many different countries to begin with, and from each they brought something new. From the countries of Europe came rice, wheat, oats, barley, rye, clover, alfalfa, grapes, sugar cane, citrus fruits, and sugar beets. Farmers are indebted to Great Britain for their draft animals, hogs, sheep, beef and dairy cattle. From countries in the Western Hemisphere came potatoes, tobacco, peanuts, beans, and the largest crop of all, corn.

One other explanation of the more rapid farm development in America is the fact that there was more land than people, while in Europe and Asia there were too many people, and often too little land.

Because farmers in the United States and Canada have received so much help from others, they should, in the same way, help other farmers in the developing countries.

RURAL SOCIAL AGENCIES HELP AMERICAN RURAL PEOPLE

Along with the development of American farming, there was a growing enrichment of rural life. Rural reconstruction began in earnest in the decade between 1910 and 1920 and has gathered momentum as the years have passed.

Today in the United States there are many local and

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national organizations that are available to help with all phases of farm life. These social agencies are considered by the rural pastor as allies of the rural church. They cover all areas of rural life. They help the pastor serve his people better.

There are agencies to help conserve the soil and to help in the purchase of farms. There is a program of agricultural extension by county agents and teachers from colleges of agriculture. There are classes of vocational agriculture and homemaking in high schools across the country. There are voluntary organizations of farmers such as the Farm Bureau and the Grange. Traveling libraries are at work in most of the three thousand American counties. Also in these counties there are county health workers.

These social agencies are not only a source of satisfaction for the American farmers, but they suggest a new responsibility for the farmers in the United States and Canada to render much greater assistance to those farmers who have not had such great opportunities.

CHAPTER 2

THE CHURCH IN THE RURAL WORLD



The rural church is out where the people live. What it can do and what it must do to bring to the peoples of the world that more abundant life that is the New Testament hope can best be seen in the history of the rural church in the United States. Much of the development in this country can be adapted gradually to other parts of the rural world.

The Rural Church Movement

There have been at least three periods of development for the rural church in the United States. First came the pioneer period when new churches were built in every country neighborhood. Then came the growth of city industries with an accompanying migration from the country to the city, resulting in a decreasing rural church membership. There followed a period of reconstruction—the development of “the rural church movement.”

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THE PERIOD OF PIONEER GROWTH

The period of pioneer growth was begun on the eastern seaboard of the United States by Christian groups coming from Europe. It continued in the East until approximately 1870. In the midwestern states, rural church growth went along with western migration and continued until about 1900. Camp meetings, revivals, and special religious experiences were greatly emphasized. New denominations or sects increased rapidly. Pastors lived in the country among their people and over one-third of them served from five to ten churches or more.

THE PERIOD OF DECLINE

The period of the decline of the rural church came next and was largely due to the rapid migration of farm people to the city. The rural pastor in many instances also moved from the country to the city. Going to a town or city church was considered a promotion for a minister back in those days.

THE PERIOD OF RECONSTRUCTION

The 1909 report of the Roosevelt Commission on Country Life dealt extensively with the rural church. "In the last analysis," the report declared, "the country life problem is a moral problem. In the best development of the individual the great motives and results are religious."

Again it said, "The time has arrived when the church must take a larger leadership, both as an institution and

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through its pastors, in the social reorganization of rural life. The spiritual nature of the individual must be kept thoroughly alive."

The specific recommendations dealt with a resident ministry, trained for rural work, and for interdenominational co-operation on a local level. "The country pastor," the report continued, "must be a community leader. He must know rural problems. He must have sympathy with rural ideals and aspirations. He must love the country." But it took the work of many rural church leaders to carry out these recommendations. Eighteen different denominations eventually established rural church departments. In-service schools for rural pastors were organized and seminaries began to offer special rural courses.

THE PRESBYTERIAN DEPARTMENT OF CHURCH AND COUNTRY LIFE

The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. was the first to provide national leadership in the rural church movement. In 1910 Dr. Warren H. Wilson was made superintendent of the new Department of Church and Country Life.

During a seven-year period, the Presbyterians made surveys in twelve states, issuing eighteen reports of the work. These studies showed the type of pastors who were succeeding and the type who were failing; also the kind of parish program that was successful and others that were not.

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As an outgrowth of these findings, Wilson's Board asked him to establish "demonstration parishes" to show the kind of program he was advocating. By 1920 he was supervising demonstration parishes in fifteen states.

THE METHODIST RURAL CHURCH DEPARTMENT

The Methodist Church was the second denomination to establish a rural church department. In 1918 Paul L. Vogt, a Methodist layman and a great teacher of rural sociology, was appointed to this task. He soon discovered that theological seminaries were training men away from the country instead of equipping them to become rural pastors. So in 1919 he started in-service training schools for rural pastors across the country. During the first year twelve hundred pastors attended these short courses. More than four thousand different pastors were given such training during the first five years.¹

In order to train a new generation of rural pastors, Dr. Vogt helped Methodist church-related colleges and seminaries to establish rural church departments. Edwin L. Earp, Mark A. Dawber, C. M. McConnell, and Aaron Rapping were among early Methodist rural teachers.

OTHER RURAL CHURCH DEPARTMENTS

Sixteen other large denominations established rural church departments, following the example of the Presbyterians and Methodists. Malcolm Dana, of the Congre-

¹ The writer had the responsibility of organizing and directing these summer schools.

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gational-Christian Church, was the third such national leader. His greatest contribution was to show how improved transportation made larger rural parishes possible. For ten years, from 1919 to 1929, Dr. Dana went across America developing these larger parishes.

The American Baptists came next with their rural program. Mark Rich became their rural church director. He is an outstanding rural church authority at the present time.

Churches having established departments of rural work are shown in the table on the facing page in the order in which they were organized.

Most of these departments publish a monthly bulletin dealing with church methods for rural pastors. They also conduct in-service training schools and parish surveys, prepare literature, develop a complete year's program for a rural church, which they sometimes call a "par standard," and represent the rural church in all of their denomination's plans.

These Protestant rural departments co-ordinate their work in a committee of the National Council of Churches. This interdenominational group holds an annual "Convocation," publishes a monthly periodical called *Town and Country Church*, prepares programs for Rural Life Sunday and for the Harvest Festival, and promotes a very useful educational program.

One of the weak spots in the work of most of these rural departments is the failure to include their overseas rural missionaries in their programs of technical service.

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DEPARTMENTS OF RURAL CHURCH WORK¹

<i>Denominations</i>	<i>Year Started</i>
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.	1910
Methodist	1917
Congregational-Christian	1919
American Baptist	1919
Evangelical and Reformed	1922
Roman Catholic	1923
Protestant Episcopal	1924
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.	1925
United Lutheran	1926
Church of the Brethren	1927
Disciples of Christ	1943
Southern Baptist	1944
National Lutheran Council	1945
Evangelical United Brethren	1947
Cumberland Presbyterian	1950
United Presbyterian	1950
National Baptist	1953
Church of God	1956

Also, they are doing too little to help the rural church in the developing countries of the world. Recently, however, many departments co-operated with ecumenical rural institutes held in Switzerland. They have also been very active in relief work overseas through such organizations as CROP and the Heifer Project, Inc., as well as in caring for displaced persons from Europe. The work of one such department, the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, which is making a positive contribution to the rural church, will be described more fully.

¹ Some of these departments deal with the work in towns larger than the U.S. census definition of rural, i.e., 2,500 people.

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THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC RURAL LIFE CONFERENCE

In 1937 Msgr. Luigi Ligutti, because of his demonstration rural parish at Granger, Iowa, was elected president of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference. Four years later he was appointed executive secretary.

Msgr. Ligutti emphasizes the value of the family farm. He also deals with a growing need for part-time farming to enrich the lives of factory workers. He shows the place of co-operatives in farming and emphasizes the fact that our American democracy is maintained and developed, not by laws or textbooks, but by building little islands of democracy—Christian homes and Christian communities related directly to the land.

The program of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference is carried on almost entirely through the diocesan organizations. The main phases of the program are: (1) assistance to young Roman Catholic couples desiring farms; (2) the organization of parish credit unions to provide capital for farm purchase; (3) the organization of local co-operative marketing associations; (4) the settlement of European refugees in Catholic rural parishes; (5) the promotion of group hospitalization; (6) co-operation with government agencies for the improvement of farm practices.

RURAL CHURCH MOVEMENT OVERSEAS

The rural church movement began to spread to Asia, Africa, and Latin America in the thirties with the inception of Agricultural Missions, Inc. Of course, in-

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dividual missionaries had been struggling with rural poverty as they preached, taught, and healed, but the founding of such an organization represented the concerted efforts of various mission boards to bring Christ's gospel of an abundant life to the village people of the world.

Brayton C. Case, pioneer agricultural missionary in Burma, played a leading role in the founding of Agricultural Missions, Inc. Returning to America for his furlough in 1928, he studied at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. While there he interested faculty members in the idea of "agricultural missions." The following year Cornell held the country's first "school for missionaries," offering agricultural courses specifically designed for missionaries serving in village areas.

AGRICULTURAL MISSIONS, INC.

Agricultural Missions, Inc. was begun in New York City, November 14, 1930, with John H. Reisner of Nanking College of Agriculture acting as its first full-time secretary. Cornell University was represented on the board by Dean Albert Mann. Today the organization is supported by thirty-eight mission boards. Ira W. Moomaw is the secretary.

Agricultural Missions, Inc. has promoted annual short courses for missionaries at representative colleges of agriculture. In 1945 a valuable seminar in extension teaching methods was added to the training program. It has been given each year since by specialists in the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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Another unique training program for missionaries on furlough was started by Agricultural Missions, Inc. in the summer of 1957 at Berea College, Kentucky. Its purpose was to train missionaries for an all-inclusive service to village people.

One of the newest services of the organization has been its Rural Work Conferences held in different regions of the world. It brings together missionaries, village pastors, F.A.O. workers, and interested government officers to exchange experiences and plan their work more effectively. A total of twenty-seven such conferences have now been held in ten different areas of the world.

Agricultural Missions, Inc. maintains an information service and publishes a quarterly, *Rural Missions*, which is sent to rural missionaries in fifty different countries.

THE EXCHANGE OF RURAL CHURCH TEACHERS

More than half of the accredited seminaries in America now offer courses for the specialized training of rural pastors. There are twenty-three schools that have a rural department with one or more full-time professors. Some of these instructors have also served as visiting teachers or exchange professors in overseas seminaries that are training pastors for village work. Such exchange of teachers accomplishes two things. The American rural specialist offers a much-needed type of rural instruction to pastors in the developing countries. In addition, he brings back to his students in America an entirely new and different interest in the rural work of the church overseas.

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He also helps develop the great new idea of "One Church and One World."

CROP

In August, 1947, the farmers of the United States began an organization of their own called the Christian Rural Overseas Program, or CROP. Foremost in this movement were the 180,000 American rural churches, the 21,697 granges in the United States, and the farm bureaus and other rural organizations. During the ten years since its organization, CROP farmers have shipped 240 million pounds of food, valued at over 32 million dollars, overseas. The farmers of Kansas alone shipped \$1,769,507 of food. The rural church secretary of the Ohio State Council of Churches, Mr. Clyde Rogers, once took 32,000 day-old chicks from his Ohio farmers to the village people of Iran. Other gifts sent by American farmers through CROP include seeds, livestock, agricultural tools, and commercial fertilizers.

The new compassion of governments, as evidenced by F.A.O., Point Four, the Colombo Plan, and others, is providing new resources and new opportunities for the church. The rural pastor and the rural missionary can get new and valuable help from these government representatives.

Since World War II the rural people of the developing countries of the world have had their windows opened. They have decided they cannot continue year after year, hungry and landless, "phrase-fed and promise-crammed."

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Like infant giants and almost without leadership, they have risen up to ask for a better life. This opportunity is before the Christian church today. As we look at the many and great rural needs in the developing countries, we are grateful that the rural church movement among them has begun.

The Church and Village Agriculture

Previously we have seen the development of agricultural methods and the progress of rural reconstruction in the United States and Canada. As we looked beyond, we saw the terrible need for such progress in other parts of the world. In the last section we saw how the rural reconstruction movement was reaching out to try to meet the overwhelming poverty, hunger, and ignorance abounding in so many exploited and neglected areas. Now we will take a look at some of the things that the church has been doing on the village level in the developing countries.

AFRICA

Reducing hunger in many African villages has meant encouraging agricultural diversity.

Victor Buck, a representative of the Mennonite Church, tells us how he introduced many new food plants into the Belgian Congo:

"When I first arrived in the Belgian Congo in 1930, the varieties of food found there were very few. To obtain new and better seeds I sought help from agricul-

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tural college libraries, botanical departments, and other sources, such as the International Agricultural Institute and the International Agricultural Food Administration.¹

"We introduced adlay, a new cereal from Ceylon, which is much higher in protein and fat and generally more nutritious than other grains. One variety of papaya came from Hawaii. Avocado, bananas, breadfruit, coconut, guava, sweet cassava, and taro came from other parts of Congo. We also tried a variety of sugar cane that is very high in sugar content."

In Angola Allen T. Knight, of the United Church of Canada, introduced soya beans as a protein supplement. And Alex Overhold, a Lutheran rural missionary, has been propagating improved varieties of corn for trial and distribution among the Zulu farmers of his mission.

Charles E. Smith, a missionary of the Baptist Church in the Belgian Congo, tells of his work:

"Two years ago I started raising some European and American breeds of poultry. In the beginning there was a 'wait and see' attitude on the part of our local people. However, when they saw these little chicks grow up into fowls twice the size of their own, and bringing five times the number of eggs—eggs much larger in size, too—things began to change.

"I sent an improved cock to the pastor of each of our rural churches and started exchanging eggs with the

¹ Quotations by missionaries and pastors in this and succeeding chapters have been taken by the author from personal conversations or written reports.

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people of this large area. Soon we had more demands for eggs than we were able to care for."

Gerald Neher, a rural missionary in Nigeria for the Church of the Brethren, has most recently been introducing trees into his part of Africa. "This past year," Mr. Neher explains, "we have been distributing fruit trees that we obtained from the government nursery. It takes two days' wages to pay for one tree, but we took all the mango trees the nursery had, and people were begging for more."

The planting of trees to provide a cash crop or a food supplement and to help prevent soil erosion has been suggested for many parts of Africa. Fenton Sands, long a rural church worker for the Protestant Episcopal Church in Liberia, found tree crops particularly useful in his area for holding back the soil and improving the land.

All over Africa the church, encouraged by its fraternal workers from many denominations, is struggling valiantly to improve rural conditions. The effects of this struggle have been noted by two observers from opposite sides of the continent.

"Many farmers in Ghana still use only a hoe, a broad knife, and a wooden plow," reports Noah Dzobo, "but changes are coming rapidly. New and improved seeds and better farm practices are being introduced. The church is closer to the farm people than the government is. The church community is now replacing the old tribal groups that are rapidly falling apart. Ghanaian pastors

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are not only bringing spiritual freedom, but they are teaching us better agriculture, health and housing, and nutrition."

And from clear across the continent comes another comment: "All of our churches in Southern Rhodesia that have become self-supporting," says pastor Kenneth Choto, "have done so because of improved agriculture."

INDIA

First we visit H. Drewer Johns, Methodist missionary, who says:

"The wheat that is grown on our institute farm is an improved variety produced by one of the Indian government research stations. It is grown and kept pure by us and the seed made available to village farmers at the same price as ordinary wheat. This improved wheat has increased yields by approximately two and one-half bushels per acre. We also have a nursery where vegetable plants and fruit trees are grown for transplanting in the villages in an attempt to add variety to the Indian diet."

W. Brewster Hayes, a Presbyterian missionary in India, next describes his work:

"We now have approximately fifty acres of orchard. In it we have as many species of fruit trees as we have been able to get, and in some cases several varieties of a single species. We have at least thirteen species of citrus fruits, and several varieties of the two hybrids, tangeloes and citranges. We were the first in this part of India to

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grow grapefruit. More recently we have introduced some of the better tangeloes. We are also developing local selections of guava. On a modest commercial scale we grow mangoes, guavas, grapefruit, tangeloes, Kinnow Mandarins, papaya, and one variety of sweet oranges. We have been able to gross more than one thousand dollars per acre here with papaya."

Mr. Hayes's experimental work not only introduces variety into the Indian diet but positively demonstrates how village farmers can augment their small incomes.

This dual result has been achieved in still another way by Arthur Slater, a Presbyterian rural missionary. For many years Mr. Slater has worked to improve Indian poultry, importing purebred stock and sponsoring poultry shows. Summarizing this work, he says:

"Today there are hundreds of purebred fowls in some 375 villages. We have encouraged the keeping of purebred fowls in the humble homes of our village Christians. The chickens have helped many very poor and underprivileged people to a better life. They have enabled many to have a little money to purchase a blanket in the cold weather, to help pay the fees of their children in school, or to buy much needed additional food."

There is no country in the world more in need of soil conservation than India, because it has such a big population to feed. Presbyterian Forrest Couser tells of his efforts at reclaiming some badly eroded land:

"Last year I wanted to reclaim a badly eroded bit of pasture land and called for one hundred volunteers. Can

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you imagine my surprised delight when four hundred responded? Better still they have kept it up. We surveyed, plowed, trenched, and then planted one thousand trees. They have been carefully cared for and watered and more than nine hundred trees are still living. The trenches are on the contour and this part of India is seeing its first contour plowing and contour grass stripping. This year we held an Arbor Day on July 4th and planted twenty-five thousand trees on our highest hill. An army of school children did the work. I call them the First Foresters of India. They have won the allegiance of their parents and will live to see the value of their work and will pass the lesson on to the next generation."

Pastor A. D. Jacob of Hyderabad has emphasized that "the church has a great responsibility for improving village life in India."

In the few examples cited here we have glimpsed the varied agricultural approaches that are possible in meeting this responsibility. Later we will examine other aspects of village help—co-operatives, health, and literacy.

As in Africa and India, the church is reaching out to improve agriculture in other parts of the world. Under the stimulus of the church, agricultural colleges and rural high schools in the Philippines are co-operating with village pastors to improve farming methods, according to Pastor Jose Raguidin. In Egypt the Khaki Campbell egg-laying duck has been introduced to provide extra food and income for the marginal farmers living in the area of the Presbyterian mission at Assiut. Poultry is

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also the means chosen by Edgar Miller to improve the diet of people near his station in Bolivia. He imports baby chicks from the United States and people come from miles around to secure a pair to get a start for themselves.

We have mentioned in this chapter only a few types of agricultural improvement that the rural missionaries and the rural pastors are providing for the people of the developing countries of the world. But the list is a long one and includes: introduction of new farming methods, new crops, animals, and poultry; soil and water conservation; control of crop and animal pests and diseases; promotion of farm youth organizations and farmers' institutes; discouragement of gypsy farming and peonage by demonstrating alternatives; and all of this accompanied by a genuine spiritualizing of rural life.

WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

There are government specialists and a few rural missionaries ready in nearly every country to help rural pastors and their people in the big job of agricultural improvement. Yet many more are needed, for there is hunger everywhere.

As Christians we are a part of our United States Government and we are glad that our taxes are used to help in providing technical assistance to some other countries where hunger is present. But in addition to what our government is doing, our churches have a great responsibility in meeting this problem of chronic hunger through-

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out large areas of the world. Governments work with other governments. The church works directly with the people.

The churchman in America or Canada may be greatly interested in the people of other lands. He may not always see the relation of better agriculture and better nutrition to the progress of missionary work. If we travel around the world, our airplane does not stop at the tiny farms. If each of us could live with a Mexican family for a year and eat only tortillas or corn meal for breakfast, dinner, and supper—as many rural Mexicans do—we would be more interested in sending more missionaries to teach agriculture and nutrition along with our gospel of love and salvation. (The ready response of farmers to CROP shows that we would do more through our church if we were challenged to do so.)

One of the reasons why our mission board secretaries do not send out more trained agricultural missionaries is because we church members do not provide the necessary funds. The average church member in the United States can hardly believe that he gives only four and a half cents per week or \$2.45 each year to foreign missions.¹

The per capita personal income in the United States is over two thousand dollars. For many of us, it is much more. Certainly \$2.45 per member is not very much to give to foreign missions for a whole year. We need to be told again that we are our brother's keeper.

¹ National Council of Churches figure, quoted in *The New York Times*, December 8, 1958.

CHAPTER 3

LAND OWNERSHIP AND THE CHURCH



In almost every country of the world the church is—or should be—interested in the question of land ownership. Farmers in many areas can never own a piece of land, nor can they support themselves as tenant farmers (actually serfs in some instances).

Since the church is concerned with the whole man, it is necessarily interested in helping each man sustain and improve his physical life. We have already seen how earnest workers in God's vineyard are fighting hunger and disease in order that the disadvantaged of this earth may be truly receptive to Christ's message. But the introduction of new crops and new farming methods is only a single aspect of the complicated rural picture. Overcoming the barriers to land ownership is one more.

The fragmentation of farms by outworn inheritance laws is a land ownership problem that prevents many of

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the world's people from supporting themselves. Absentee ownership of large blocks of farming land is another. Sometimes these two factors are combined, as pointed out by J.S.Q. Bakhsh, an observant pastor from Karachi, Pakistan:

"Although Pakistan is an agricultural country, most young people cannot own land to cultivate. There are two reasons. One is our landlord system. There are some people who own thousands of acres of land, although they do not farm it themselves. Their many tenants pay the taxes and furnish the seeds, but they get only half of the crop. One other difficulty is our Land Act, which provides that a farmer's land must be divided equally among all the male members of his family when he dies. Thus the land is divided and subdivided until each parcel becomes so small that no one family can live on it."

Even in the United States, land ownership is a problem. Increasing mechanization makes a large farm necessary. It also requires a large capital outlay. Many rural young people move to the city, fearful of assuming such indebtedness, or unable to do so.

Whatever the barriers to land ownership may be, they pose a practical challenge to the church as well as a humanitarian one. If people move away, a rural church dies for lack of support. It just as surely falters if people are too poor, too undernourished and sick, too defeated and helpless to support it.

In this chapter we shall examine some of the ways in which the rural church is meeting the challenge posed by

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land ownership. We begin with the developing countries because land to till is a major concern to nearly a billion people there, as Ira W. Moomaw points out.¹ He also notes that “. . . it would be a serious error to underestimate the importance of land as a factor in the revolutionary movements sweeping much of the world.”

Land Colonization

The purpose of land colonization is to increase the size of family farms or to provide more fertile fields. In every instance, the families are helped to own the land they cultivate. A number of governments are helping families to move from sections that are too thickly populated to other areas. Where the government promotes colonization, the church should co-operate. In some countries where no other agencies are available, the church can promote colonization.

Some churchmen may feel that land colonization plans are too new for the church to undertake. But they are not new. They began long ago as we can see if we look into our Old Testament.

“Now the Lord said to Abraham, ‘Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you.’” (Gen. 12:1.) And land colonization continued in Israel. Moreover, most of the early settlers in North America came in “church colonies,” that is, they were representatives from some single

¹ Moomaw, Ira W. *Deep Furrows*. New York: Agricultural Missions, Inc., 1957, p. 142.

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language or church group in Europe who migrated to the United States or Canada.

A CO-OPERATIVE LAND COLONY IN THAILAND

The average farm in Thailand is only four acres. That's about all one farmer can cultivate with hand tools. It provides him with a subsistence living that leaves no money to build churches, or schools, or to buy books, or to educate his children. To counter these conditions Charoen Sutasahn, a young Christian mechanic living in Shiengrai Presbytery, helped to start a land colonization plan in northern Thailand. His account of this Christian effort provides the basis for the following brief summary.

Ten years ago forty-four farm families, six teachers, six mechanics, and others, making a total of sixty families, were given a jungle area of 1,200 acres by the Thai Government. Located along the Mekok River, the colony is near the northern boundary of the country. Of the 1,200 acres of dense jungle, four hundred acres have been cleared. This makes an average of ten acres for each of the forty families that has remained. In addition to the ten acres per family for field crops, each family lives on an acre plot and has its own garden, poultry, and fruit.

The colony owns three tractors, a binder, and a small machine for threshing grain. New industries are being introduced, including a mill for handling sugar cane and an oil extractor for soya beans, peanuts, and sesame. Cottage industries or village crafts supplement farm in-

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comes and provide work for the five dry months. The colony has an active church of two hundred members and a growing school.

LAND COLONIZATION IN THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippine Federation of Churches has been promoting a program of land colonization since 1947. At that time the members of each evangelical rural church on the islands were questioned to determine the number who had no land, how many would like to take up a homestead in another area, what farm tools they had to take with them, and whether or not they had a water buffalo to use as a draft animal. The response to the survey was much greater than had been anticipated. Letters poured in.

Looking at one of the first of these resettlement or colonization projects, we can see how the Federation helps. Sixty-two persons seeking farms arrived in Manila one day in a small boat. They had come from the thickly populated island of Samar, one of the eastern islands. They came largely from one congregation and their pastor was recognized as the leader of the colony. Church World Service loaned them 1,090 pesos for food and later supplied the colony with medicine. A church temporarily housed the women and children while the men were sent ahead to the island of Palawan to stake out their homesteads. The Philippine Federation of Churches sent them three steel plows, nails for their houses, and seeds for their fields. It also helped them to organize a

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credit union, elect a settlement council, and build a church.

In other cases congregations have been helped to settle on the islands of Mindora and Mindanao.

A SUCCESSFUL COLONIZATION PLAN IN MEXICO

Several church colonization plans have been developed in Mexico for the purpose of getting the people off the worn-out, dry land on the hills down to the richer soil of the eastern lowlands. One of these colonies comprised a group of twenty-five families who had been members of various churches in the mountainous area of Oaxaca. They went down into an area in the eastern part of their state with Lester Zook, Presbyterian rural missionary, who was invited to accompany them and share in their co-operative enterprise.

The colony first burned over and cleared the land by hand, since they had no machinery. Each family built its own house, made a garden, and secured some poultry. The group purchased a rice huller co-operatively. (With this huller the farmers did not have to sell their rice unhulled, only to buy it back at a high price after it had been hulled and cleaned.)

Christian nurture was not overlooked. Two of the colonists had some training in a Bible school and they conducted Sunday schools and held church services three times a week. Members also went to surrounding areas, visited prospective converts, and distributed Christian literature.

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"We believe that this colony," Zook writes, "is just the first of many more, for it shows that our people want good land and can adapt themselves to the hot climate where there is good unused land."

LAND SETTLEMENT PROJECTS IN BOLIVIA

On the plateau of La Paz in Bolivia, the Board of Missions of the Oregon Yearly Meeting of Friends has experimented with a method of family land settlement. Realizing the hunger of the Indians for land and the handicaps of peonage, the Friends purchased a tract of three thousand acres with a view to sub-dividing a part of it for sale to resident Indians. Conceived as a pilot project, the Friends hoped to establish some form of improved land tenure that would free small farmers from peon labor. Tracts of from five to ten acres were allocated to selected families. The plan provided that the purchase price could be paid by long-term annual installments, or purchasers could work out part of their payments by helping with construction, road-building, and terracing.

The extent to which any church or mission can engage in such an enterprise is, of course, limited, but the results in terms of better homes and happier families commend it.

The Canadian Baptists, who pioneered in land reform in Bolivia, have had time to appraise the changes made in the lives of the Indians by such land reform. The mission, after a probationary period, gave farms to an

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interested group of Indians in their area, the only proviso being that each family build a house and maintain proper stewardship of the land. Mission reports note that the former hovel-dwelling serfs, now given opportunity and hope, pitched in and built, not houses, but homes—complete with tile roofs, wallpaper, and bedspreads. School attendance, which had been erratic, zoomed. There was no longer a single half-filled school in the district, but eighteen schools filled to capacity. The church, too, began to fill up. Old serfs became deacons and young Indians became lay preachers to new communities. Today, the Canadian Baptists report, there are seventeen established preaching points and six organized churches.

In these visits to Bolivia we can see that the commission given two thousand years ago is still valid—to proclaim release to the captives and sight to the blind. The church *can* succeed if it faces the peonage system, which is the number one social and economic problem in all of South America.

Land Ownership in the United States

In every country in the world the family farm is the pattern the rural church is trying to develop. This is no less true in the United States, where in recent years it has become much harder for rural youth to get started in farming.

In this section successful methods for encouraging American farming will be described. It should be noted

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that, although these different methods are being applied in the United States, they could be used in *any* country by *any* rural church.

FATHER-AND-SON PARTNERSHIPS

Many American rural churches are promoting father-and-son partnerships. When the sons of the Brethren families of South Waterloo, Iowa, come home from college with their new wives, they do not need to hunt for a job. Instead of a father asking his son to be his hired man without pay, a Brethren father takes him into partnership in running the home farm. The father builds a new home for his junior partner alongside the old farm house, or, as in twenty cases, the older folk build a house for themselves near the country church and move off the farm, turning the home place over to their sons.

These South Waterloo farmers know that in order to have a real church, they must hold their young people, and in order to hold their young people in this rural community, they must help them get land. As they have mechanized their farms, they have added livestock instead of more acres. They call it two-armed farming—grain and livestock. Father-and-son agreements provide jobs for all, as in the following example.

One of the fathers has three sons, each of whom he took into partnership with him as the son became of age. The eldest son is now responsible for all the machinery. He does all the custom work—baling, combining, and corn picking. The second son does nothing but field work

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on the home farm. The youngest son cares for the livestock. The partnership has 520 acres of land, thirty head of registered Brown Swiss cattle, and feeds several hundred head of hogs a year.

"It has been my observation," says the Brethren pastor, "that father-and-son partnerships are one of the finest ways to keep the children, parents, and grandparents together and to save the land and the people for the church." Facts underscore his words. One Sunday school class of young married couples at the South Waterloo church has fifty members, another has seventy.

RURAL CHURCH PLACEMENT COMMITTEE

The rich black soil of the Panther Creek parish in Iowa, northwest of Des Moines, produces eighty to one hundred bushels of corn to the acre. Outsiders are always anxious to buy these farms. The parish realized in 1945 that in one short generation they could lose their membership if their land were bought by speculators or by nonmembers of their church, so they set up a placement committee to keep their young people and to keep their farms.

This placement committee locates farms that are for sale, appraises the land, gives advice, helps to obtain purchase money, helps its young couples to rent or to buy farms, and supervises their farm practices. All of this is done without one cent of expense to the young families. The church is simply trying to insure its future.

One young man thirty years of age and his wife had

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to leave the community temporarily to get employment on a dairy farm twenty miles away. But they wanted to move back to Panther Creek permanently. The placement committee located an eighty-acre farm and loaned the young couple 90 per cent of its purchase price. One of the men of the church lent the young people some brood sows. The pastor and church members helped paint the house and put on a new roof, and helped to build a corn crib. Each spring and autumn the placement committee meets with the couple to give experienced farming counsel where needed, thus helping to strengthen the original investment.

Four years after their purchase, the couple had six dairy cows, 380 laying hens, and were selling more than fifty hogs a year. They had contoured their fields and built a mile and a half of terraces. The young wife, now the mother of four children, is a good musician and is a great help in the church. She says, "My husband and I hope we can help some other young couple to get started here in the same way the church has helped us."

On the corner of this farm is a spot where another church once stood, but it died because "its young people left." A mile and a half away another church died of the same ailment. The Sunday in March when the writer visited the Panther Creek church there were fifty-two cars parked outside and 178 people inside, and there were two large Sunday school classes of young adults. This church is succeeding in keeping its young families by helping them get started in farming.

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CHURCH HOMESTEAD PLAN

When the minister came to his parish at Big Lick, Tennessee, in 1934, he found poor soil, low incomes, and relative isolation. His people had no telephones, no electricity, no improved farm machinery, no public health program, no organized recreation, and no church building. He set out to do what he could for the community, particularly for its young people.

"Our main purpose," he has said, "was to keep our able young people in the community. Security on the land provides a good foundation for a Christian home."

This pastor believed that young couples needed more than good advice if they wanted to buy a farm. They needed a practical homestead plan, so he and his church members developed one.

The Big Lick homestead plan is managed by a board of trustees composed of three elders of the church and the pastor, who is also treasurer of the revolving fund, which was begun with a gift of \$4,500. The board appraises, surveys, and buys land for resale in family-size farms at cost.

The buyer signs a contract of sale and agrees to operate the farm himself and not to speculate on it. He promises to conserve the soil, join the local farmers' association, and help in community projects. He pays only 3 per cent interest and is given thirty years to pay the principal.

There have been no foreclosures under the Big Lick homestead plan, and no one has defaulted on his pay-

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ments. Besides helping young couples buy land, the board also lends money for farm and home improvements. In ten years twenty-seven couples have been located on church-owned farms and ten others helped to buy homes.

Today the families who live in this rural community on the Cumberland Plateau have modern farm machinery, purchased co-operatively, and most homes have electricity. Soil conservation methods cover the parish. At the center of the community stands the church, every stone of which was gathered from surrounding farms by the loving hands of its members. Calvary Church is not only a symbol of God's presence at Big Lick; it has become the center for all community life.

DENOMINATIONAL LOAN FUND

When a certain Lutheran minister returned from the European war front after World War II, he brought with him to his new parish of three rural churches near Gary, Minnesota, a special interest in young men and boys. His confirmation classes soon contained more young men than girls, and the young men even outnumbered the girls in the choir of one of his churches.

The autumn after his arrival one of his young farmers presented him with a question: "Pastor, you have invited each of us to share our problems with you. I have bargained for the farm adjoining my father's. I want to stay in this community and in this parish. Can you help me get the money to buy this farm?"

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The minister promised to help.

"If these farms and these young couples are lost to our church, both the community and the church will suffer," he explained later. "These fields and these farms are important to our church, partly because of what they produce, but more because of the men who will cultivate them. These farms constitute the props by which our church receives both people and means."

The minister knew, of course, that his denomination had recently passed a resolution stressing the importance of keeping Lutheran families in already established Lutheran parishes. The resolution also provided that a part of the investment funds or endowments of the denomination might be used for home or farm loans.

Thus the young farmer and his wife and three small children were helped to stay in the parish. He is now the president of the Men's Brotherhood of St. Olaf Church and is active in helping other young couples to locate in the parish.

A little later a young man in the St. Petri Church on the same circuit received similar help. The church board in Minneapolis lent him 80 per cent of the purchase price to buy a farm. The following year a young couple with five small children was helped in a similar way. This couple had practically no funds and undoubtedly would have been unable to get started in farming without such help from their church. When the writer visited them, they had built a new barn and were getting along well in the dairy business.

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"Our church has its roots in such farms as this," the pastor pointed out to the writer. "It is on these farms that the people are reared who will utilize, attend, and support our church."

The next year a twenty-two-year-old farmer and his wife and two small children came to the church for help. The youth had saved only \$500 as a farm hand. By this time the Men's Brotherhood of St. Olaf Church had an active placement committee, which went to work to help select a small farm for the couple. Eighty acres were purchased with the \$500 and a loan of \$2,300 from the church's investment funds. This young farmer is keeping up his payments and at the end of his first year had four milk cows, fifty sheep, nine hogs, and a large flock of laying hens.

When the work of this Minnesota pastor came to the attention of his denominational board, the Evangelical Lutheran, it resulted in his appointment to what has now become the Parish Conservation Service. The denomination has 109 districts similar to a presbytery or diocese. In less than two years, fifty-six of these districts, or a little more than half, had farm placement directors, and 131 local congregations had a placement committee helping young couples to buy land.

A full-time director is now in charge of this pioneer program. The objective is to assist Lutheran people to remain or locate in Lutheran parishes, where they can make use of the services of a Lutheran church. The Parish Conservation Service acts as a clearing house of

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information on farm sales and tenancy (including business and professional opportunities), and it brings Lutheran buyers and sellers together for transactions that will indirectly be to the advantage of Lutheran congregations. In cases where help is needed in financing, an application initiated by or endorsed by the local pastor is forwarded to the investment department of the denomination. Other conditions being satisfactory, the denomination lends up to 80 per cent of the value of the farm, charges 4 per cent, and amortizes the loan over a twenty-year period. It considers the money used for this purpose an investment in people, rather than in farm lands.

This denomination is 70 per cent rural. A recent check showed that its national headquarters had a list of 451 farms for sale and in the process of being purchased by Lutheran buyers. The Evangelical Lutheran Church, one of the fastest growing groups among Protestants, is helping its youth get started in farming or business, but it is also helping to maintain strong Lutheran congregations.

"We have hundreds of congregations and church buildings, a vast heritage," the board points out, "which it is our duty to preserve and transmit to our children. There is, however, a continual adding and subtracting in the membership rolls of our congregations. One of our tasks is to encourage the adding, while slowing down as much as we can the subtracting. We have a heritage. It is our God-given task to preserve it and extend it."

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Increasing Land Ownership

In this chapter we have been pleading for a new gospel of the soil. The church to be strong must promote land ownership for rural youth, help develop father-and-son partnerships, and help families get started in farming. It must co-operate with governments in land colonization plans, or where none exist, try to promote settlement plans of its own.

In many countries of the world local governments are slowly becoming interested in helping people to own the land they cultivate. In 1955 a new land tenure bill was passed in the Philippines. In June, 1949, a land reform law was passed in Korea that provided for the purchase of land for distribution among tenants and part-tenants. More than a million acres have been sold on a five-year-plan to over one million tenants. In Taiwan, since February, 1953, a total of 343,000 acres of land has been purchased by the government and resold to thousands of tenants. These tenant purchasers represent 50 per cent of the total tenant population. Mexico is probably leading all Spanish-speaking countries in land reform, while the government of India is working against great odds in helping Indian farmers to own the land they cultivate.

We have seen in this chapter how mission boards and local churches are trying to help in the land ownership movement. And in nearly all areas of the world, farm schools, run by the church, are training youth in many countries to be better farmers.

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There may be some few people who might criticize this practical side of the work of the rural church in helping its people to get started in farming. They seem to think that Jesus said, "For I was hungry and you preached me great sermons; I was thirsty and you prayed fervent prayers; I was a stranger and you took up big offerings; I was naked and you appointed a committee; I was sick and you sent me mimeographed letters; I was in prison and you organized a spiritual retreat."

Both types of church work are important. Both types are necessary. "For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so faith apart from works is dead." (James 2:26.)

CHAPTER 4

THE LARGER RURAL FELLOWSHIP



The concern for others that characterizes the Christian fellowship in every part of the world is manifested on the village level in many diverse ways—so many, in fact, that we cannot hope to explore them all. For example, the growing dignity of women, long regarded as little better than beasts of burden in some parts of the world, can be largely attributed to the work of the church. A whole book could be written on missionary efforts in this regard. Another could be written on what Christian women are doing for themselves in many village areas. Space does not permit us to enlarge on this theme, or to consider what youth programs the rural church is developing, or what Christian concern is achieving for the handicapped, aged, and homeless in many areas.

This chapter, however, will treat of some typical aspects of Christian concern. It will briefly review the

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co-operative activity of the rural church, and the work of the rural church in health and literacy.

The Rural Church and the Co-operative Movement

To many people, the rural church is a co-operative fellowship that includes the whole of life. Its members are "active" seven days a week. A visit to such an active church and to such a co-operative community will illustrate what a rural church can do when it combines true Christian fellowship with the tools of what we call the co-operative movement.

A CO-OPERATIVE COMMUNITY

Traveling on Highway 40 in northwestern Kansas, a hundred miles from the Colorado and Nebraska lines, you come to a small rural community called Quinter. It is different from many communities because it has a church that always has been a co-operative fellowship.

This little village of the plains was settled in 1855. Along with the sod houses, and dugouts with sod roofs, the people built a church. For more than seventy years this church has been a co-operative fellowship. Its sixty-four charter members called four men to become lay preachers. These men preached in homes and school-houses, paid their own expenses, and won new converts. Seventeen outposts or missions in schoolhouses were established in those early days. (Now the automobile has consolidated these seventeen outposts into the present Quinter Church, with 366 members.)

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The same dynamic spirit of missionary zeal sent six members to work in Asia and two people to work among the Navajo Indians. In one year since World War II, Quinter farmers sent two carloads of wheat to feed hungry children of other countries. Many churches give 10 per cent of their budget for missions, but 48 per cent of this church's budget is sent out of the parish for overseas work.

The co-operative fellowship of Quinter Church is illustrated by the way its members care for refugees from other lands. As soon as one family is helped to establish itself, another new one is brought in. The men of Quinter congregation even built a new house for one of the families they sponsored.

In 1925 the church built an eight-bed hospital to care for the sick. This service was so much appreciated that the county government built a twenty-eight-bed addition and assumed all of the hospital budget. Because of the community's need for more physicians, the men of Quinter church built a new "clinic," a \$16,000 office building, which provides space for two young doctors and a dentist.

It was natural for such a group as this, united in their church, to co-operate in various weekday activities. In 1916 a farmers' co-operative was formed to build a grain elevator and market the wheat. It was followed by a co-operative creamery. With the coming of the automobile, a co-operative oil company was formed to sell gas and oil. Later, church men built a co-operative

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food locker. This was followed by co-operatives for handling groceries, hardware, and farm machinery. Recently, a new co-operative grain elevator was built. In one year it handled 400,000 bushels of wheat. All of these co-operatives were united finally into one large co-operative organization of 682 members.

In order to help families and especially young people in times of emergency, a credit union was organized. The Quinter credit union now has \$100,000 in funds, which it lends for buying homes or livestock or to help young couples get started in business. Although these are largely character loans without collateral, no money has been lost in the twelve years of operation.

The Quinter church community has drawn its strength from its Christian fellowship and has implemented and extended its influence through co-operative endeavor.

FARMERS' CO-OPERATIVES

There are two important motives in every co-operative. It is partly an organization by which to achieve a better life for one's self, and also it is an organization whereby one can help others to achieve a better life. Both of these motives must be present if a co-operative is to succeed.

Co-operative techniques were first developed more than a hundred years ago in Rochdale, England. The four main fields of co-operative activities are merchandising, credit, marketing, and services. The co-operative movement is highly developed in the Scandinavian coun-

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tries and in the United States co-operative activity is extensive in farming areas. There are not only credit unions and co-operative marketing organizations, to name two examples, but also mutual irrigation companies, dairy cattle artificial breeding associations, and co-operative banks for co-operatives.

Co-operatives improve many phases of farm life. They put new farm machinery, better seeds and fertilizer, and necessary funds within the reach of many disadvantaged rural communities. Extended to the developing countries under the aegis of the rural church, the co-operative movement offers hope of a better life as symbolized by the Quinter co-operative fellowship that began as a sod house community seventy years ago.

INDIA

A group of rural villages in South India has a splendid record with an egg-marketing co-operative. The Katpadi Co-operative Egg Marketing Society, organized by J. J. De Valois, a rural church worker of the Reformed Church, sells up to three hundred thousand eggs a year for its village members and provides thousands of rupees in cash for them to meet their family and farm expenses. A yearly fair demonstrates the achievement by villagers in improving their poultry, grains, fruits, vegetables, and livestock.

In 1947, when Pastor Joseph John came to his present rural parish in South India, at least 75 per cent of the people were in debt. He organized a co-operative savings

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and loan association and helped people to get rid of these old debts. Another unique co-operative venture is his co-operative wedding plan. All the weddings of the same month are held at the same place, on the same day, and with the same feast. This cuts down the cost of a wedding from 200 rupees to 25 rupees per family.

Earl Ziegler, former Brethren missionary in western India, also helped to promote a credit co-operative. Members paid up their debts, bought land and cattle, and improved their homes through this mutual self-help plan.

FROM LEBANON TO THE FIJI ISLANDS

The Rural Church Center at Jibrail, Lebanon, organized a farm co-operative that was the second such registration in the whole Lebanon nation. This co-operative bought two tractors and did custom-plowing for whole communities for a modest fee. Small farmers did better than they ever could with slow, inefficient oxen.

This co-operative movement has been carried by rural church workers to the far corners of the earth in recent years. For example, in 1955, the latest date we have, the Fiji Islands reported eighty-six credit unions organized by Roman Catholic priests, with 12,487 members.

THE BELGIAN CONGO

Fifty-eight farmers in the Kisantu rural parish in the Belgian Congo organized a selling and buying co-operative in January, 1951. Four years later membership had climbed to one thousand.

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Besides purchasing trucks, the co-operative built three warehouses, bought a diesel-powered cassava mill that grinds ten tons of cassava vegetable into flour each day. It also operates eight village stores.

The Rev. Andre Cauwe, a rural priest of the Roman Catholic Church, at Kisantu, who helped organize this co-operative, says, "Men are not going to hear the words of a preacher who speaks of their souls, if they see that he is totally disinterested in the suffering of their bodies."

THE PHILIPPINES

It is the duty of the rural church to make the whole society Christian. One place to begin is with our economic relationships. In many countries rural people are in debt. The church can organize co-operative credit unions to deal with debt. Credit unions do not provide the whole answer to the problem of debt, but they provide one answer, and a good one.

The rural church in the Philippines has probably done more in promoting co-operative credit unions than any other. This is largely because of the leadership of a great rural missionary of the Disciples of Christ, Allen Huber.

"Every rural pastor faces the blight of poverty in his parish," Huber points out. "Good people with brave hearts lose their ambition after generations of debt and subsistence living."

The credit union idea quickly caught the imagination of church people in the northern provinces who had seen the desperate credit needs of their people and were de-

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terminated to do something to alleviate their condition. By 1941 30 credit unions had been organized with some 2,000 members, 43,000 pesos in shares, and total outstanding loans amounting to 68,000 pesos.

Credit unions, promoted by local churches, have had such an encouraging growth during the past eighteen years that the Philippine government recently organized the Agricultural Credit and Financing Corporation. Capitalized at 10 million dollars, it is helping Filipino farmers improve their economic conditions in the same way as that pioneered by the church. It is also taking over and enlarging the established church credit union program, since its resources are so much greater.

From a humanitarian point of view, a credit union never fails, because there are always children educated, land purchased, homes built, hospital bills paid, old debts at exorbitant interest rates paid off, and life made forever more livable.

The co-operative movement is still in its infancy in many countries of the world, but it is growing. It is simply one form of the enlargement of the Christian family to the whole community. We help each other through these co-operative enterprises. Nations as well as families are more and more concerned with helping each other. Herein lies the germ of universal peace.¹

¹ The writer is aware of the fact that many important phases of the rural church have had to be omitted in these pages, such as evangelism, Christian education, and worship. They are thoroughly treated in other books. For example, there are more than five hundred books on evangelism.

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The Rural Church and Health

A part of this Christian concern for others, which we have just mentioned, is the interest of the rural church in the health of its people. The church's co-operative fellowship includes within its purview the well-being of each family—nutrition, sanitation, the prevention of disease.

Health, we recall, occupied a large place in the active ministry of Jesus, because he was concerned with the whole man. And so today his followers in every country in the world try to help people to live richly and to live long, to help all to have the more abundant life.

PUBLIC HEALTH IN THE UNITED STATES

The United States has become much more health conscious during the past twenty years. The 1959 *World Almanac* reports that city people consult a doctor five times a year, and rural people average almost four medical visits annually. Health facilities cover nearly every rural area in every state. There is an average of one hospital for every county in the nation. What were once considered unpreventable and often incurable diseases are now being brought under control, paralytic polio being one of the most publicized.

Health education is extensive and is emphasized throughout the country in relation to proper nutrition, agriculture, housing, sanitation, and immunization.

With this rapid improvement of the health situation in

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North America, we are more responsible for improving the health conditions in other lands.

THE WORLD'S HEALTH PICTURE

Health facilities throughout the world present a very one-sided picture. Fourteen countries or nations are fortunate enough to have one doctor for every thousand inhabitants or less. At the other extreme, there are twenty-two countries where only one doctor is available for every twenty thousand or more people. Between these two extremes are to be found the other 124 countries.

THE NEW COMPASSION OF GOVERNMENTS

It would seem natural for those countries located in areas that have better health facilities to help others who have poorer health facilities. The new "compassion of governments" may be illustrated by some of the recent appropriations of the United States Congress.

In August, 1957, Congress, declaring it to be the policy of the United States to assist other peoples in their efforts to eradicate malaria, voted an appropriation of \$23,300,000 to be spent during 1958 for this purpose. That same Congress also voted for the United Nations Children's Fund \$11,000,000, and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency \$23,800,000. Larger sums were voted for other phases of technical assistance. Several other countries of high health achievement have taken similar steps to help improve world health. Many countries participate in the World Health Organization.

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THE RURAL CHURCH IS OUT WHERE THE PEOPLE LIVE

There are three limited sources of health service in most of these countries where the younger churches are found. In the first place, there are the government departments of health and the government farm schools. Secondly, there are the rural missionaries, and the hospitals and farm schools operated by the church. In the third place, there are foreign agricultural and health workers from member states of the United Nations.

As a rule, there is an encouraging amount of co-operation in the providing of health services. This is well illustrated in West Africa. Noah Dzobo reports that his denomination, the Evangelical Presbyterian, has recently built two church hospitals in co-operation with the Ghana Government. National funds were used for the new building and the church provided the staff.

Usually the various sources of help are too few and too far way, but the rural church is out in the country where the people live, even the most remote or inland areas. Therefore, the rural church, the rural pastor, and the rural missionary must promote, demonstrate, lead, and explain better health methods and better farm methods in order that the people may have health instead of sickness and food instead of hunger.

THE CHURCH SENDS HELP

We read about Jesus once sending out the Seventy. His church has been sending out people ever since to minister to urgent needs throughout the world. We may

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understand this better if we look at one tiny, needy girl and one humble Christian who was sent out to work in the rural slums, among the cane growers of Cuba.

She was only a tiny baby, but she had a lot of name, Victoria Bartola Gainza y Reyes. She was born in one of the *baracomes* or rural slums of Cuba on November 2, 1955, and for six weeks she was fine. Then she began to vomit, and vomited up everything she ate. She managed to keep down just enough to stay alive. When Victoria was three months old she weighed only seven pounds. Her big, dark eyes looked tremendous in her tiny, drawn face. She kept her head arched way back. Her skinny little legs were crossed and drawn up tightly.

But the rural church was at work in eastern Cuba. There was a nurse there, employed by the church, who went among the tiny villages to visit the people in their homes—including Victoria's home.

Victoria's chances didn't seem very good. But the nurse began giving her goat's milk, with some medicine drops to lessen the spasms in her stomach, and of course some vitamins. Immediately Victoria began to gain in weight; she was hungry all the time. Strained cereal was added, then bananas. She ate all she could get. When Victoria was eight months, she weighed 14½ pounds, had two teeth, and was a happy little girl.

But other things happened, too. This nurse, who got the goat's milk for Victoria, taught a class in baby care to girls living nearby. The girls in this class all adopted Victoria, too. First, they took turns in making her for-

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mula for her. They learned how to make it a little stronger as Victoria grew. One day Victoria's mother brought her to the class of girls, and the nurse gave her a bath. Then on each Saturday morning a different member of the class bathed, fed, and cared for her.

Victoria is the youngest of five children who live with their parents in a little two-room shack made of poor *jagua* boards. It is so near the edge of the bay that the high tide comes almost to the door. Their house has no windows, but is so loosely put together that there is no lack of ventilation.

Pepito, Victoria's oldest brother, is eight. He weighs only thirty-eight pounds, because he probably never got enough to eat. Consula is six; her twin sister died while she was still small. Martha, four, and Jesus, two, are not much better off, but the whole family can look forward to healthier lives now that the church has shown them the way with Victoria.

This story illustrates why the rural church in every country around the world is greatly concerned with health. Babies like Victoria must be fed a proper diet. In every one of the fifty developing countries of the world there are baby girls like Victoria, and boys, too. But the rural church is there at work.

As we learn more about the work of the rural church in these many lands and more about the people who are at work in each one of them, we learn anew the meaning of Jesus' words, "As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me."

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The Rural Church and Literacy

All Christians know and accept the command, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation." But this task is not so simple as it may seem. The new Christian must be trained. He must learn how to read his Bible. He must learn how to live a Christian life. He must learn how to have a Christian home.

Today more than 25 thousand trained missionaries from the United States and Canada are out in the far corners of the world preaching and teaching the gospel. The size of this huge task of world evangelism can hardly be fully realized or understood.

THE SIZE OF THE PROBLEM

Approximately 44 per cent of the total population of the world who are fifteen years of age and over are unable to read or write. Ninety-seven nations out of a total of 198, or nearly half, have an adult population 50 per cent or more of which is unable to read.¹

ILLITERACY A PROBLEM FOR THE RURAL CHURCH

As a rule, the agricultural countries are the ones that have the highest rate of illiteracy. Those countries where 50 per cent or more of the male population is engaged in agriculture are largely the same countries where 50 per cent or more of the adult population is illiterate.

¹ United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, *World Literacy at Mid-Century*. Paris, France, 1957.

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In case there are any readers who might feel that it is not important for "peasants" or farm people to know how to read and write, we might suggest some of the principal values of literacy in village communities. Being literate makes it possible for a farmer to study his Bible and other religious literature. It makes it possible for him to vote in government elections and thus get a government that is interested in improving farm life. Practically all farm people have relatives away in the city, often their sons and daughters, and one must be literate in order to communicate with them. A farmer must be able to read in order to learn the rules of health and sanitation, child care, and food preparation; and to learn about seed selection, disease and pest control, and improved methods of cultivation.

WORLD BROTHERHOOD

Every Christian believes, at least to some extent, in world brotherhood. We talk about it. We often pray for it. But what does it mean to each of the 700 million people in the world who cannot read and write? This man lives from day to day as his ancestors did. He plows the same fields, carries water from the same well, lives in the same kind of poor house, and worships the same clay idols. He thinks no new thoughts and sees no new horizons. He has lost his past and has no plans for his future. "A vague and pathetic shadow, scarcely even a person!"

But today Christians are talking about "liberating" the "oppressed millions." It is of little value to liberate

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their bodies and not set their minds free, or vice versa. The question of war and peace hinges upon what "world brotherhood" means to each of us.

If man is of greater worth than things; if man is important; if all men are important and equally so; then the conviction will also arise that all races and nations must have equal opportunities. World Brotherhood will not come until we see man emerging from ignorance, poverty, and disease—all partial results of illiteracy. The ability to read and write is one of the keys to man's freedom. Only when the "can read" people learn to share with the "cannot read" countries will we begin to see the meaning of World Brotherhood.¹

FRANK LAUBACH, LITERACY TEACHER

In 1915 Dr. Frank Laubach was sent by the American Board as a missionary to the island of Mindanao in the Philippines. The fierce Moros there had been fighting and hating the Christians ever since Magellan discovered the islands in 1521. In seeking common interests, Laubach began to study religion with them, each helping the other. Out of this experience in friendship, he developed, beginning in 1929, what has since been known in most countries of the world as "the Laubach method of learning to read." It is sometimes referred to as the "Each One Teach One" method.

It is not only a science and technique in adult literacy. It is much more than that. It is a thing of the spirit.

¹ Pyke, Louis Taft. "A Study of World Literacy." Unpublished Master's thesis, Drew University, Madison, N.J., 1945. pp. 1-4.

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Dr. Laubach has applied to education that mysterious "love power" that united the early followers of Jesus.

By 1935 Dr. Laubach had developed his method so successfully in the Philippines that requests poured in from church leaders in other countries for him to come and share his techniques. That one year he visited Malaya, Ceylon, India, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Turkey. Next came a trip across Africa and then back to India and on to fifty or more other countries.

Today, in every one of the developing countries, there are missionaries and nationals rapidly training literacy teachers. In America mission boards co-operate in developing new techniques through the Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature of the National Council of Churches. Dr. Floyd Shacklock co-ordinates this activity of the American churches.

THE WORLD CHURCH MUST HELP

When Dr. Laubach returned to the Union Seminary in Manila to recruit and train more literacy teachers back in 1931, Pedro F. Daludado was one of the seminary students who volunteered to take the training. In discussing the program twenty-seven years later, Pastor Daludado said:

"I believe the greatest value of this literacy work has been spiritual rather than economic. The most impressive thing to me has been the look of joy in the faces of the people as they stand up at the close of the course and demonstrate their ability to read passages in the Bible."

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Pastor Daludado's conference now employs two full-time deaconesses to train literacy teachers in each church in the three districts of his conference. Public school teachers voluntarily give their evenings to literacy classes for adults. The women of each local church provide volunteer teachers. Each group usually meets once a day for a month. Materials are now furnished by UNESCO. Out of these adult literacy classes come most of the church's new members.

"In my district in southern Rhodesia," Kenneth Choto explains, "the church provides and trains the school teachers and the government pays their salary. Most of these teachers voluntarily provide night schools for adults. There is a great hunger all over Africa for education and for the gospel. When the appointments are read at each annual meeting of our denomination, people are appointed each year to prepare new literature and others to promote literacy. As literacy grows, the death rate among children decreases, life expectancy increases, homes are better and more sanitary, and farm methods improve. We feel we are becoming a happier people."

D. P. Titus tells us that literacy work is so much a part of the work of the Indian church that each annual report of every church contains "the figures of progress made in literacy."

These examples are encouraging, but before we dismiss this challenging work from our thoughts, let us glance again at our figures. There are in India, for example, 215 million people who are 15 years old and

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over, and according to the latest census, 173,857,820 of these, or 80.7 per cent, cannot read and write. And Pastor Titus tells us, "The number of teachers is still inadequate. Many villages in India have no teacher and no school of any kind for lack of support." Then he tells us that a pastor-teacher who teaches both children and adults and conducts the Sunday church services can be employed for only \$150 a year in American funds.

We recall that the average per capita income (not per family) in America is more than \$1,940 a year. If this average American Christian tithed, he could supply one entire Indian village with a school for children, a literacy class for adults, and Sunday worship services for the whole village. This average American would still have \$44 left each year to give to his local American church budget. This shows us why world literacy is a task for the world church.

SECTION II

Problems of the Rural Church

CHAPTER 5

AMERICAN RURAL PARISH ENLARGEMENT



The size of a rural parish is indicated by its area in square miles, the number of churches served, and the number of people served by one pastor.

There are several reasons why many rural parishes in the United States today need to be enlarged. There are also a number of problems that the enlargement or merger of parishes suggests to the thoughtful layman. However, several studies have explored the need and the results so that we can answer with some degree of accuracy such questions as:

“What would happen if circuits were combined? Or if a one-church pastor took on an out-station? Or if a pastor of a village church went out and served an enlarged parish of three or four rural churches?”

Reasons why parish enlargement should be considered in rural America include: shortage of ministers, mechanization of agriculture, and the unchurched fringe.

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THE SHORTAGE OF MINISTERS

Almost every denomination is alarmed over the fact that it does not have enough ministers. One denomination, for example, reported 6,500 pastoral charges as "supplied" or "to be supplied." They are not being served by regular trained members of the conference.

Ten seminaries of a certain denomination are graduating each year only 60 per cent of the number of men needed for ministerial placement alone. Another American church reports that 46 per cent of its pulpits are without installed pastors. And yet another denomination reports that 26 per cent of its churches are without ministerial leadership.

Because of the fact that there are not enough ministers to serve our pastoral charges, as they are now organized, many rural parishes should be enlarged so that present pastors could serve more people instead of leaving many of them without pastors, or leaving them with untrained pastors.

THE MECHANIZATION OF AGRICULTURE

Those who are familiar with rural life in America know about the new improved farm machinery. One man can cultivate three or four times as many acres as his father farmed. This mechanization of agriculture has left fewer farmers in the countryside to be served by the same local rural churches. In order for the rural minister to serve even as many people as before, he must serve a larger geographical area.

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The large proportion of tiny old churches or small congregations in a single synod is shown in a recent report of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.). (This example can be duplicated in other denominations.)

SIZE OF 3,875 PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES IN THE SYNOD OF NORTH CAROLINA FOR THE YEAR 1957

<i>Number of Members Per Church</i>	<i>Number of Congregations</i>
50 or less	855
51 to 100	1,002
101 to 199	853
200 or more	1,165
	<hr/> 3,875

It would seem reasonable to anyone to believe that the 1,857 small churches of one hundred members or less, which were established back in the days of the horse and buggy and of mud roads, should be united and their parishes enlarged.

THE UNCHURCHED

Every parish has its unchurched fringe. The people who live over the hill, on the back roads, in tenant homes, on the outskirts, or in the many new housing developments added to the parish are a challenge to the busy rural pastor.

New communities or new settlements of factory workers in the country probably would add up to more than a thousand each year. A recent report of the Southern Railroad noted that 255 new projects or fac-

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tories were built along this line in the southeastern states alone. New homes are being built to house the new workers for these 255 projects. This influx is typical of the many new industrial workers who are moving into the country to live. As the pastor evangelizes these marginal or new people, he must push out the boundaries of his parish.

Two Types of Enlarged Parishes

There is the centralized enlarged parish, like the centralized school, where all attend one large central church. Then there is the decentralized parish, in which there are several preaching places. The centralized parish usually has a better plant and equipment, better music and worship services, and more opportunities for graded education and activities that will meet the challenge of the new mobility affecting so many American neighborhoods.

The decentralized parish offers opportunities for more local leaders and makes a place for different social or economic or neighborhood groups to worship as they wish.

The natural trend is from the decentralized to the centralized parish, the same as the centralization of schools, but it should not proceed ahead of the willingness of the members and even the nonmembers to unite. A parish should not be centralized solely for the convenience of the pastor, but rather to provide a much more efficient program of church activities for the whole family and for the community.

AMERICAN RURAL PARISH ENLARGEMENT

A Study of Merged or Enlarged Parishes

The writer and his students made a special study of ninety enlarged or merged parishes, selected from three different denominations. Questionnaires dealing with pastoral duties, church giving, reasons for merger, and desirability of parish enlargement were sent to the ninety ministers. Two years later they were queried again, using the same questionnaire.

PASTORAL DUTIES

One question asked each of the ninety pastors was, "Have you been able to handle the increased duties?" The answers are shown in the following table.

PASTOR'S ABILITY TO HANDLE INCREASED DUTIES

<i>Replies Given</i>	<i>Percentages</i>
Able to handle the increased duties	66
Able, but with difficulty	24
Able with the help of laymen	5
Not able to handle the increased duties	5
	<hr/> 100

CHURCH GIVING

Often a pastor speaks of "my church" or "my people." The people who pay him, think of him as "our pastor." The question naturally arises, would these same people give the same per capita amount if the pastor enlarged his parish, or served other groups, or merged another church with his circuit? Therefore, the question was

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asked, "Have there been any changes in the per capita giving of your people since the merger?"

The results of the per capita giving in the ninety enlarged parishes covered by the questionnaire are shown in the table below.

PER CAPITA GIVING IN PERCENTAGES

Increased giving	39 per cent
Same giving, but better attitude	10 " "
Same giving and same attitude	36 " "
Same giving, but poorer attitude	7 " "
Decreased giving	8 " "
	<hr/>
	100

We see from the above table that when the minister took on new people to serve, in 53 per cent of the cases the giving of his old members did not change. In cases where there was a change, 39 per cent increased their giving and only 8 per cent decreased. Two years later, 80 per cent of these parishes reported an increase in giving.

REASONS FOR MERGER

When the ninety pastors were queried as to why their parishes were enlarged or why the mergers were formed, their answers fell into four categories. But one answer was dominant. Eighty per cent reported that a shortage of ministers produced the merger. Church unions accounted for 5 per cent, and finances (pastor needed more salary, 10 per cent) contributed to the merger in 15 per cent of the cases.

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DESIRABILITY OF MERGER

The next question asked the ninety pastors was, "After your experience in these enlarged parishes, do you think it is wiser to have a better-trained minister serve two or more churches or an enlarged parish; or is it better to appoint a less-trained minister to each church, according to its ability to pay?"

Ninety-four per cent of the pastors answered that the enlarged parish with a trained pastor was better.

When asked if they thought the enlarged parish would continue, 47 per cent believed that it should continue, 36 per cent that it would, and 17 per cent replied that they did not think that the mergers would continue.

SUMMARY OF STUDY

The study of merged circuits or enlarged parishes shows that the enlarged field was able to support a better trained and more effective minister, and that under his ministry the churches fared better than when they were in smaller parishes paying a smaller salary to a less-trained pastor.

It should be made clear that it is not the intention here to show that all rural parishes should be larger than they now are, but many could be larger. Three facts, however, need to be emphasized.

In the first place, improved farm machinery is responsible for fewer people living in many rural parishes than formerly lived there. The tractor doesn't go to church, the hay loader hasn't any children to take to Sunday

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school, and the combine doesn't have any wife to sing in the choir. In order for a rural pastor to serve even the same number of people that former pastors served in the same territory, he probably will need a larger parish in terms of square miles if one considers strictly rural areas apart from the metropolitan or industrial fringe.

In the second place, all denominations are raising their educational standards for men entering the ministry. This naturally reduces the number of ministerial candidates.

The third factor is familiar to everyone. With modern improved transportation facilities, a pastor can serve more people than he could do before these facilities were available, if he only wishes to do so.

Ways and Means

Many American rural churches today want all of the time of one pastor, even though many other people are left without any minister. If they can pay him, they keep their pastor for themselves, rather than share him with others. Likewise, many a minister prefers to leave off his out-appointments and serve only one church, if that church can support him. These obstacles to merger can be overcome in many instances. A church bus is of great value in bringing people together and enlarging the parish. Pastors would be much more willing to serve enlarged parishes if it were not for the increased travel expenses. And so it goes. Some of these factors are examined next.

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A CHURCH BUS

The writer and his students made a study of sixty-six churches that operated buses. These churches were located in twenty-seven states and were connected with fourteen different denominations. The study sought to discover whether a bus was an asset to a rural parish, whether it contributed to church enlargement, or increased attendance, and something of the financial outlay that could be expected.

Those who used buses found them a positive advantage. Ninety-two per cent of the pastors reported their bus projects "definitely successful." Increased attendance is shown in the table below.

INCREASED ATTENDANCE WHEN BUS WAS USED

<i>Church Services</i>	<i>Average Increased Attendance</i>
The church school	39.4 people
Morning worship service	39.6 people
Evening worship service	30.8 people
Total different new people	77.2 people

The church bus usually brought not only *non-attendants* but *nonmembers* to the church. A North Carolina church reported nineteen "professions of faith" during the first year from among the people who came in the bus.

The average bus brought 3,484 people to church per year, or 67 people per week. The church-owned bus cost 10 cents a mile to operate and the rented bus cost 29 cents per mile. The buses that were rented traveled 22.2

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miles per week, while the church-owned buses averaged 89.3 miles per week.

The surveyed pastors were asked to write their comments and suggestions regarding the use of the bus. Highlights from a typical letter are given here. A church in Michigan bought a used bus and later a second one. The sexton drives one of these buses and the Sunday school superintendent the other, neither one charging for his services. The repair work is also donated. The gas and oil costs \$75 a year, and the insurance \$56. The extra offering from new youngsters brought to the church school defrays the operating cost of the buses. More than sixty children have been reached by one bus and more than thirty-five by the other. The comments of this pastor and his suggestions to a church starting the use of a bus are very helpful.

"Whenever there is an unchurched area or unchurched families within reach of the church and the parents are willing to send their children, after a house-to-house canvass, a church ought to have a bus. Don't listen to some in the church who say, 'Let the parents bring them!' If we don't put forth an effort to reach the children we will lose another generation.

"I am now finishing four years in this pastorate and in that time there has been a substantial increase in the work of these two churches. I believe they have advanced more in influence and numbers by the addition of the buses than by any other one thing. They were small churches. They were more or less visionless. But with the

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addition of the buses there has been not only a new interest, with membership increasing, but there has been a far more competent set of teachers and leaders."

OUT-STATIONS HELP TO ENLARGE PARISHES

Some parishes that have a centralized worship service on Sunday morning find it desirable to have small chapels or out-stations for Sunday schools. This plan meets the needs of some local groups and serves to enlarge a parish at the same time. The membership resides in the central church area. The out-station is like a branch library in a county library unit. Where no special buildings are available, such as abandoned churches or unused schoolhouses, the neighborhood meetings can be held in homes.

LAYMEN WILL HELP

The early church in America was established largely by the preaching of laymen. In an enlarged parish with several branch stations or chapels, laymen can still render a great service to the church. The younger churches use lay preachers all over the world. A "station preacher" serving only one church in a small area cannot challenge laymen to help in the same way that a pastor can who is enlarging his parish, reaching out to un-churched neighborhoods, and trying to evangelize all the families in a big area or community. Lay preachers do not want to take the place of a comfortable station pastor, but rather to help a minister whose evangelistic

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zeal has reached beyond his own strength and outrun his own schedule beyond his own little parish.

PASTOR'S EXPENSES

In the days of barter, cash salaries were smaller and ministers were largely paid in produce. Now larger cash salaries are needed. Gasoline for the pastor's car must be purchased. More books for ministers are now available and necessary. Many more training conferences and institutes call for the minister's attendance. Sick calls that were formerly made by the pastor in homes nearby are now more apt to be in distant city or town hospitals.

All of these factors, the enlarged parish, the increased travel, the many more meetings to attend, point to the fact that something must be done to provide the modern rural pastor with travel expenses.

The writer and his students arranged with 119 rural pastors to keep an accurate record of their travel expenses for four weeks. These rural pastors were located in thirty-five of the forty-eight states, representing a cross section of rural pastors throughout the country.

Pastors were asked to keep two records, one of their personal or family travel expenses, and the other of their trips on purely church business. It is this latter expense, the travel on church business, that interests us here.

It was found in this study of 119 pastors that the average rural minister traveled 668 miles during a four-week period while engaged in the work of the church. Since the average rural minister works fifty weeks a year,

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his church travel for one year would amount to 8,350 miles. The survey disclosed that the cost of travel averages five cents a mile, or \$417.50 per year.

As the membership increases, the travel should increase, because of additional pastoral work. Yet these surveyed pastors had no travel money provided for them.

If they had been county agricultural agents, county nurses, soil conservation field men, or salesmen for any business firm, travel expenses on business trips would have been provided for them.

If a pastor's travel expenses are cared for in a separate item in the budget so that he does not need to pay them out of his salary, he would be much more willing to serve an enlarged parish.

ENLARGED PARISHES NEEDED

The rural pastors in Asia and Africa walk farther, preach more sermons each week, and visit more villages than the rural or village pastors in Canada or the United States. The same thing is true of their laymen. How they work for their church! Theirs is a great gospel, because it has made such great changes in their lives. This makes possible much larger parishes among the younger churches than in North America.

The trend of rural life in America shows very clearly the need for the enlarged parish in most rural areas. As we enlarge rural parishes in America, we release ministers and money for use among the churches in the developing countries.

CHAPTER 6

CO-OPERATION AMONG RURAL CHURCHES



Co-operation among churches in the United States is a very complicated and difficult problem. Our early settlers came here from many different countries in Europe. Each group brought a different church background; as a rule, each national group belonged to a different denomination. Many came here in protest against a state church, seeking in this new country what was called "freedom of religion."

Protestantism emphasized individual choice in religious matters. The evangelistic approach in this country increased church membership from 16 per cent of our population in 1850 to 63 per cent in 1958. Many revivals have resulted in a new church being organized in a community where there were already plenty of churches. As a result of these many factors, church co-operation has not been the practice to any considerable extent in most rural communities.

CO-OPERATION AMONG RURAL CHURCHES

MANY DENOMINATIONS IN AMERICA

The number of different denominations in the United States changes from year to year, but the latest report gives 251.¹

A survey in southeastern Ohio showed there were forty different denominations in six counties. Two of these six counties averaged one church to 180 people.

Reports on the number of denominations in America are very apt to be misleading. If we group 133 of the smaller denominations together, we find they comprise only 3.2 per cent of the total number of Protestants. Likewise, if we group fifty-two of the larger denominations together, we find they comprise 96.8 per cent of all Protestants. In an eighteen year period, the fifty-two larger denominations have had a 36.3 per cent growth, approximately twice as fast as the growth of the 133 smaller denominations, which had a growth of only 18.9 per cent.

These facts suggest that the smaller denominations do not affect church co-operation as much as their names and their numbers would imply. Our greatest need is for more co-operative spirit among our larger denominations.

Church Union and Interdenominational Co-operation

There have been forty-two organic church unions during the past fifty years. Local congregations by the hundreds, which have been competing for many years, come

¹ *Yearbook of American Churches for 1960*. New York: National Council of Churches, 1959, p. 251.

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together in united churches when their overhead organizations unite.

Some groups are actively moving toward church union at all times. In 1931 the Congregational and Christian Churches united. In 1934 the Evangelical Synod of North America and the German Reformed Church united. Now these two united groups have completed a union, the United Church of Christ, thus merging all of the four old groups into one. In 1906 the Cumberland Presbyterian and the Presbyterian U.S.A. united. In 1920 the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists joined them. Now the United Presbyterian Church has joined with the Presbyterian U.S.A. group. There is much to encourage us these days in the realm of co-operation and unity within the Protestant churches.

THE YOUNGER CHURCHES HAVE UNITED FASTER

Of the forty-two church unions during the past fifty years, slightly more than half, or twenty-two, have been among the younger churches, where there is a much smaller total constituency. In nearly every one of the developing countries where these churches are found, there are "united churches." The names of some of these united churches and the years when they were established are seen in the table, *Church Unions Among the Younger Churches*, p. 95.

Most colleges, theological seminaries, and hospitals among the younger churches are maintained by several co-operating denominations.

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CHURCH UNIONS AMONG THE YOUNGER CHURCHES

Uniting

<i>Date</i>	<i>United Churches</i>	<i>Denominations</i>
1924	Church of Central Africa	Presbyterian of Scotland and Dutch Reformed of South Africa
1924	United Church of Northern India	Congregational and Presbyterian
1926	Presbyterian Church of Ghana	Basel Society and Church of Scotland Mission
1927	Church of Christ in China	16 denominations
1929	United Evangelical Church of the Philippines	Congregational, Presbyterian and United Brethren
1931	Methodist Church of South Africa	3 British Methodist groups
1931	United Evangelical Church of Puerto Rico	United Brethren, Christian, and Congregational
1931	Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana	3 European churches
1934	Church of Christ in Thailand	Baptist and Presbyterian
1936	Evangelical Church in Guatemala	Presbyterian and Central American Mission
1938	United Church of Northern India	Evangelical-Reformed and old United Church
1941	United Church of Japan	Most Protestant churches
1945	Church of Central Africa in Rhodesia	Congregational, Presbyterian, and Union Church of the Copper Belt
1947	Church of South India	Anglican, British Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregational

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CO-OPERATIVE OR INTERDENOMINATIONAL PROJECTS

In the United States there are many national co-operative church organizations that bring together church leaders of all denominations for specific purposes. These include the National Council of Churches, the American Bible Society, the National Association of Evangelicals, the National Holiness Association, and eighteen other national co-operative organizations. Some of these associations also join in co-operative effort.

Most states and many cities and counties have state and local councils of churches. The total number having paid leadership is 276, and as many more have voluntary leadership. Most of these have been developed during the past twenty years.

Several things are happening in the life of the church today that should affect our attitude toward church co-operation. We have an acute shortage of ministers. We are seeing the need for enlarging our missionary enterprise. Many factors have made our young people more interdenominational. The rural community is changing rapidly and becoming larger. The church, in adapting itself to any new rural industrial community, is developing a community-centered program. People are moving about from one community to another in increasing numbers. To guide and direct this new trend in church co-operation, councils of churches are developing rapidly.

These things are new enough and important enough to cause each of us to examine our own attitude toward church co-operation.

CO-OPERATION AMONG RURAL CHURCHES

CO-OPERATION IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

We hear much these days about "the ecumenical movement." People are praying for church union. But it is like any other great movement, it is valid only as it is practiced in the local community, as well as on a national and international scale. The prayer of Jesus for the unity of his followers challenges us: "Holy Father, keep them . . . which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are." (John 17:11.)

In a hundred thousand American rural communities we can help answer this prayer by uniting small, struggling, competitive churches.

The broken world today is trying to unite. The United Nations is holding before us this world-wide hope. Christ's Church and his people can hardly pray for a united world while they are divided in their home communities. Church union must come from the bottom up, as well as from the top down. Each of us can do something about it in his own local community working with his friends and neighbors.

Types of Co-operative Churches

THE MUTUAL EXCHANGE OF FIELDS

A mutual exchange occurs when two denominations are competing in two different fields, and one denomination withdraws from one field, leaving all property and members, as far as possible, to the other denomination, with the understanding that the denomination that stayed in the first field would similarly withdraw from a second

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field. The exchanges might be made at the same time, or the second withdrawal might be made later.

The matter of equity in the exchange should not be stressed, that is, whether a denomination receives an equal number of members or an equal amount of property. The important question is the strengthening of the work of the kingdom.

Where one denomination withdraws from a field and its members transfer to the denomination that remains and operates the united church, an entirely new set of officers should be elected, which would comprise the officers of both churches. The laymen of the churches can ask their administrators at any time to help arrange such exchanges.

The mutual exchange of fields removes competition, provides a more effective use of property and personnel, conserves ministerial leadership, and transforms the church from a divisive force in the community to a united and more effective agency in Christianizing all of life. Each rural community, instead of having a divided religious life, has one set of buildings to heat and keep in repair, one pastor to support, and one united religious program.

YOKED CHURCHES

Two or more churches of different denominations, in the same or nearby localities, which meet separately, but are served by the same pastor, are called yoked churches, or a yoked field. If they were of the same denomination,

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they would be a circuit, or a pastoral charge, or an enlarged parish.

A study was made by the writer and his students of fifty-one churches that were being served by twenty-two pastors in yoked fields. Ninety-one per cent of the churches included in this study were in different localities. They were 6.4 miles apart, on an average. The nearest was two miles and the farthest was eleven miles.

The main reasons these fifty-one churches gave for forming the yoked fields were: to get a trained pastor, to pay the pastor they had an adequate salary, or to provide a better church program.

THE ALLOCATED FIELD

A new field that is assigned to one denomination, when other co-operating denominations agree to stay out, is called an allocated field.

Boards of foreign missions have been allocating specific territory to single denominations for more than half a century. The larger foreign mission boards, which have been efficient in working out these allocations, now need to assume greater leadership in working with the new "faith" groups sometimes called "sects" in trying to allocate territory to them, thereby preventing acrimony.

The three Pacific Coast states have taken the leadership in allocating fields in the United States. A study of these allocated fields revealed that in every case seven of the eight co-operating denominations had stayed out and left the field to the eighth denomination that had

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accepted the assignment. Of the fifty-two allocated fields that were studied by the writer, every pastor but one said he was in favor of this method of allocating a field to one denomination.

The study included the church membership in nine of these allocated fields. An average of five principal denominations was found in each church. Thus there was one strong and effective church in each community, instead of five weak, competitive churches.

Following World War II, when there was a large migration to the western states, 345 such allocated fields were established.

With the new trend toward establishing new industries and thus new communities in the open country, this plan of allocation of fields is now more needed than ever.

THE FEDERATED CHURCH

When two churches in a community federate, it is a first step in union. A good federation may desire to become one church after a trial period of perhaps five years. On the other hand, if they continue a federation indefinitely, without a process of growing together, they are simply freezing their divisions. It is better for them to restudy their situation every five years to see how much closer their union may become. In case they decide to become one denomination, there are at least two methods or procedures. Most obvious they may all decide to go into one of their respective denominations.

Another way for a federated church to become one

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denomination is by a mutual exchange of fields. They ordinarily send such a request for an exchange to the state council of churches. Two fields are selected in which the two denominations are represented in federations. The members are asked to become one denomination in one field and to join the second denomination in the other field.

The advantages of becoming one denomination are that they will obtain their ministerial leadership from one denominational source. They will also have one source of church school literature, one plan of missionary education, one method of denominational supervision, one property plan, and one of everything else. They will have grown together.

THE LARGER PARISH

A larger parish is a group of churches within a definite rural area that organize themselves to co-operate in the task of ministering effectively to all the people within the area. The area included should be a natural trade area or sociological community wherever possible.

These larger parishes that are interdenominational have an excellent opportunity to demonstrate church co-operation. Where several denominations are found in the area, it is important to set up the larger parish along interdenominational lines.

The writer and his students made a study of thirty-five larger parishes, located in fifteen different states. The average larger parish comprised 264 square miles, of

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which about one-fifth was usually unchurched when the parish was organized. One-third of the larger parishes were interdenominational.

The parish was directed by a council, usually composed of from two to six persons from each church. More than half of the parishes also had a woman director of religious education, or another full-time parish worker. This person had charge of weekday religious education, workers' training conferences, youth councils, and vacation church schools.

In 80 per cent of the larger parishes, there was an increase in church membership, although the population in general was stationary. One of the outstanding features of these larger parishes was their co-operation with other agencies within the community. These included the public schools, 4-H clubs, granges, scouts, the farm bureau, and health units.

THE DENOMINATIONAL COMMUNITY CHURCH

A church that seeks to serve its entire community is known as a community church. It is affiliated with one denomination for purposes of ministerial leadership, benevolences, literature, reports, and training.

The writer and his students made a study of 104 denominational community churches. They were affiliated with five different denominations. A check sheet, on which were listed sixty-one questions, was used with these churches.

Although 96 per cent of these community churches

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were affiliated with one denomination their membership was made up of several denominations. The largest number had five or six denominations in the one community church. But this diversity did not offer unsurmountable problems for most of the pastors. Only 12 per cent thought it caused too much trouble to try to hold diverse groups together in one community church.

Benevolence giving by members of forty of these community churches was studied and compared with the benevolence giving of members of other churches in the same denominations for the same year. The members of the community churches gave 41 per cent more to benevolences than the average members of other churches in the same denominations. It would seem that the denominations do not lose anything from this type of church and that the community gets a broader type of service.

There is much to encourage us these days in the realm of co-operation and unity within the Protestant church. The ecumenical spirit is in the air. As Jesus prayed that his Disciples might be one, so we pray for the oneness of his church on earth today.

CHAPTER 7

RURAL CHURCH STEWARDSHIP



It takes the presence of Christ in the human heart to make of us good stewards. After Pentecost, Christians gave freely. We are told, "They sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need." They not only gave freely, but they gave systematically. "On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper."

Church giving can take several forms. It may be a systematic money offering, it may be a labor gift, or it may be gifts of crops or animals. In many parts of the world, gifts of money are not always possible but stewardship is high, nonetheless.

The Korean church, for example, is sometimes referred to as approaching most nearly the standard of the New Testament in giving freely and systematically.

Many Korean mothers when preparing their meals

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put a spoonful of rice in the cooking pot for each member of their family and at the same time an additional spoonful in their church sack. The family shares each and every meal with Christ, the unseen guest at that table. On Sunday morning these small sacks of rice are brought as gifts to the church and placed on either side of the pulpit. They represent the daily offerings of each household.

Koreans frequently give the equal of one day's wages to their church each Sunday morning, or one sixth of their weekly earnings. By taking into consideration the relative value of goods that an American farmer and a Korean farmer possesses, the average Korean church member gives six times as much to his church on Sunday morning as the average farmer in America.

Money Gifts

Whenever the church has tried to compel people to give, she has failed. Good stewardship comes only as the result of the presence of Christ in the human heart. In the Middle Ages, tithing was enforced by church and state alike, the same as any other tax. The result was that the church lost its sense of mission. We sometimes speak of those times as the Dark Ages.

CHURCH FEES

From a comparatively early date there grew up the practice of charging "ecclesiastical fees." The clergy charged fees for baptism, the sacraments, weddings, and funerals, although as early as 1229 the church protested

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such payments. Many of these ecclesiastical fees have continued in some form even until the present time.

Two other conflicts in stewardship seem to have developed in the Christian church over the years. The one was to give money for the health of one's soul, with little or no thought of service. The other motive is the one that we emphasize, the Christian motive of service to others and the glorification of God. But this ideal of voluntary church support succeeds only if it includes a full program of education in giving.

FINANCING THE EARLY CHURCH IN AMERICA

The early settlers who came to the United States and Canada brought with them from Europe most of the old compulsory methods of church support. They sold or rented pews. They raised money by lotteries. Even today one occasionally hears of bingo games being used to raise money for church support.

Probably our most modern method of "raising money" instead of "voluntary giving" is the use we make of the church bazaar. Beginning approximately in 1900, bazaars have been widely used. Many pastors, however, criticize the church bazaar. "They displace the real purpose of the women's organization," an Iowa pastor commented. A Minnesota minister believes that bazaars have a tendency to cause people to look to others for church support. "The women try to get money out of other people instead of giving it themselves," he explained. "The sense of personal stewardship is lost." A Wisconsin pas-

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tor pointed out that bazaars give outsiders the impression that the church is always seeking money instead of people. He said that whenever the church promotes a bazaar, the people say, "The church is asking for something again."

Merchants object to them as unfair competition. They say the church sells the same things the merchants offer for sale, but the church pays no taxes.

Most denominations teach that church bazaars do not represent the best type of Christian stewardship.

RURAL FINANCES ARE CHANGING

At the beginning of the present century, American farmers handled very little money. They exchanged work during the busy season, but little money passed between them. They raised their own vegetables and meat, their eggs and fruit. As they sold their eggs or produce at the country store, they took home an equal value in groceries.

Rural pastors lived within this same pattern. After a day of pastoral calling, the rural minister returned to his home with his buggy filled with vegetables and fruit, as well as a sack of oats for his horse. The pastor's family usually had no more privations than the family of the average church member.

Then suddenly, within one decade, American rural life moved over to a money economy. Mechanized farming came in rapidly. Everything from the farm was turned into money. But the old customary family pledge to the church too often remained about the same.

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Only from 1 to 10 per cent of the rural church members tithed. Many emphasized their own faithfulness to their church by boasting that they had kept up their yearly "\$10 pledge" for the past forty years "without missing a single year."

Instead of the every-member canvass, with each member of the family, including the youth, making his individual pledge, the father "took care of it." He "paid the preacher," instead of making a weekly pledge to the church.

All of these events kept the rural church member from completely fulfilling his stewardship responsibility to his church. His education in stewardship was insufficient. Even today stewardship training is badly needed in most rural churches.

PROPORTIONATE GIVING

The term "proportionate giving" is used here instead of "tithe," which is one-tenth of one's income. The reason for this is that Christians of large income can give more than one-tenth. There is also a great value in each person's voluntarily deciding upon what proportion of his income he shall give.

Instead of the old church taxes, or pew rents, or lotteries, or the modern money-making schemes (bazaars, baby contests, rummage sales, coupon plans, talent schemes, or sale of so-called church bonds) most churches today are emphasizing sacrificial giving and are using what is generally called the every-member canvass. Dif-

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ferent denominations have different names for it. It is estimated that two-thirds of our American churches use this plan.

THE EVERY-MEMBER CANVASS

It is not easy for a rural church to conduct an every-member canvass properly. All too often the canvassers are told by the husband and father, "Put me down for so much for the year. I have been giving that same amount for a good many years now." This is not every member of that family making his or her weekly pledge. This is not the giving of a definite proportion of their income. Their income certainly has not remained the same over that long period.

Most denominations provide tracts and bulletins, slides and films, sermon outlines, and "outside speakers" to help in educating each member of the church in stewardship.

MORE TRAINING IN STEWARDSHIP NEEDED

The first step in stewardship education is for each Christian to see himself in the role of a steward. What appears to be his really belongs to God for whom he is but a steward.

Our next decision must be to decide upon a portion of our income that we should return to God. Although the Bible points to a tithe, as God's share, yet the amount or proportion we give is a personal and voluntary discipline.

Training in stewardship should start with our youth.

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The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. started its "Youth Budget" plan in 1934. Within the next fifteen years, 2,400 Presbyterian churches were making a separate youth budget and conducting a separate every-member youth canvass. Dr. Luther Powell, pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Storm Lake, Iowa, an authority on church finance, states that the youth in these 2,400 Presbyterian churches give annually more than \$350,000 to benevolences, while the children and youth in 6,000 other Presbyterian churches not using the youth budget give less than \$250,000.

The American Baptists started their youth plan in 1950. The United Lutheran Church and the Church of God are also beginning to use this plan.

Theological students also need more training in stewardship. A representative group of three hundred rural pastors from forty-four states and six denominations were asked by the writer to evaluate their training in the light of their later experience in the pastorate. One of the questions asked was, "What new courses for a seminary curriculum do you suggest?" "Church Finances" was mentioned the greatest number of times for "inadequate preparation received," and it ranked seventh out of 196 subjects in being asked for as a "new course needed."

The Lord's Acre

While much progress has been made in the field of stewardship, rural churches both in America and in the developing countries of the world still have a financial

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struggle to meet annual budgets. This makes it necessary for us to consider supplementary methods of church support, such as the Lord's Acre and the church farm. But whatever our gifts, our giving to God must be an expression of our love and devotion.

ORIGIN OF THE LORD'S ACRE PLAN

Dumont Clarke, who revived this old scriptural plan in America, was religious director of the Farmer's Federation, a big farm co-operative in North Carolina. He suggested that church members set aside a definite portion of their crop, or an animal, or some poultry for sale for the church.

When Dr. Clarke began his work here in 1930, the Depression was on and every church was having its financial troubles. He persuaded six churches of three denominations to ask their members to try the Lord's Acre plan. The plan was then used in fifty churches the second year, then in 150 the next year, then on to a thousand in a short time. It soon became a well-known method of supplementing church income, thereby enlarging the program of many rural churches.

For twenty-six years, Dr. Clarke devoted most of his time to the promotion of this movement. He personally presented the Lord's Acre plan in thirty-one different states and made two tours in Canada. Missionaries, when home on furlough, studied the plan and carried it back to their churches. The rural church departments of many denominations now prepare bulletins, slides, filmstrips,

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and orders of service on the Lord's Acre plan. These will be sent upon request to any church that wishes to try this plan.

SPIRITUAL VALUE OF LORD'S ACRE PLAN

The Lord's Acre plan emphasizes work. A person works for his church. In addition to its emphasis upon work, the Lord's Acre plan brings to the farmer a new sense of God's presence. A field staked off and dedicated to the Lord is a daily reminder of God, and of our duty to him.

This definite daily work for the Lord helps to build Christian character; it unites the Sunday worship with the daily work of the week. It brings the satisfaction and guidance of religion into our daily farm life.

SOME RESULTS FROM THE LORD'S ACRE PLAN

In a study of 151 churches using the Lord's Acre plan it was found that in 67 per cent of the cases the pastor was responsible for getting the plan started. The Sunday school superintendent and teachers were the first to promote it in the other cases. In some instances, the denominational supervisor promoted the idea throughout his district. For example, the superintendent of the Jasper District, of the North Alabama Methodist Conference, reported an income of more than \$20,000 in one year from the use of the Lord's Acre plan and the Lord's Hour plan in his district.

In these surveyed churches the Lord's Acre projects

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were most frequently carried out by individuals and families, although men's groups were responsible for projects in 22 per cent of the cases.

The only rule to follow in selecting projects is to raise something suitable to local soil and climate and something that is marketable. A wide variety of products can be raised including vegetables, fruit, grain, poultry, hogs, and cattle.

In the writer's study, 124 churches reported what the Lord's Acre money was used for. New church equipment, beautifying the church grounds, and missions stood high on the list. Building or repairing the parsonage was reported by ten churches. The total list contained twenty-three different uses for the Lord's Acre money.

The pastors who were using this plan were asked to indicate what its greatest value had been to their churches. Many pastors found, to list a few, that it taught stewardship, spiritualized farm life, taught co-operation, gave everyone a chance to support the church, united giving with daily living, and gave the pastor a new point of contact with his people, as well as increasing the church budget.

The Church Farm

The church farm is closely related to the Lord's Acre plan. A church farm is a tract of land that belongs to the church or to the pastor. It has for its main purpose the supplementing of the pastor's living, or adding to the

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church budget. It provides fresh vegetables, fruit, milk, meat, and eggs for the pastor's family. It provides work opportunities at home for the pastor's children. It helps some small or weak churches to maintain a resident pastor. It gives the members an opportunity for practicing group stewardship, of working together on the church farm to support their church. It provides an additional opportunity for low-income members to help support their church by their labor, especially among overseas churches where cash incomes are very small. In some countries it provides a place for demonstrations in new and improved farm practices.

It gives the church another opportunity to become a co-operative Christian fellowship.

CHURCH FARMS IN THE UNITED STATES

A rural church in Alabama bought an eight-acre farm on which the pastor's children did much of the work. He writes:

"We began with a garden and chickens. A year later we added a cow and hogs. We soon had six head of cattle and three hogs. We had an income of \$40 to \$50 a month from our milk. Some of the neighbors have been inspired to raise better gardens, fatten more and better hogs, and raise better milk cows because of our experience at the parsonage."

A Negro rural church in Arkansas, with a membership of only fifty-two, cultivates a co-operative cotton crop on their church farm. From the proceeds they have paid

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their pastor's salary in full, built a parsonage, contributed \$107 to their World Service funds, and put money in the bank. They also inaugurated a home improvement campaign, urging the people of the community to white-wash and clean up their properties.

Another report indicates that the income from the church farm averages \$1,200 per year, which permits the employment of a much more efficient minister. He in turn is teaching stewardship in such a way that the members give more to the church than they formerly gave.

An Oklahoma church owns a small farm of approximately fifteen acres near the parsonage. This is used for raising high-grade seed crops. This improved seed is sold to the neighbors and has increased the yield throughout the parish.

The men who work on church farms create new values, raise new crops and animals, and sell their produce in the regular market. This method of giving is sacrificial. They sacrifice their own time and labor rather than try to "raise money" from someone else.

CHURCH FARMS IN KOREA

The church farm in Korea is much used as a method of church support. In 1927 one of the missionaries, W. A. Noble, began to buy small tracts of land for local churches. Then other churches began to do the same. A study made by the writer of a random selection of these Korean church farms showed that, although they had

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tracts varying in size from a tiny patch to the usual farm, the average size was two acres per church. Nearly half of these land tracts were purchased by the church members themselves, while the remainder were gifts.

As a rule, the pastors reported the plan as a good one, and said that the farms had proved useful. In every case where the members themselves cultivated the farm, it was reported as successful. After their experience with their first fields, 20 per cent of the churches purchased some additional tracts.

The income from these Korean church farms is not large. During one year it amounted to one-fifth of the total salary of the pastors of these churches. The plan is to have income from their farm to supplement other sources of income, but not to take the place of the usual methods of church support.

If anyone were inclined to be critical of this type of giving of co-operative labor to the church, he would change his mind after working a day with a Korean group. The members form a circle in the field before they begin their day's work and with bowed heads have a "season of prayer." They do the same again before the noon meal. Again near sundown they form a similar circle, and the "blessing" is asked on their day's work.

FRUIT GROWN ON CHURCH FARM

Pastor Jose Q. Ragunindin tells how the Filipinos supplement their church budgets with fruit trees: "Many of our churches plant trees such as coconuts, bananas,

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papayas, and other fruit-bearing trees on the church land. These trees beautify the church lot, as well as supplement the church income." In another instance a church in Bani received a fish pond from a layman. This "church farm" or fish pond yields approximately three hundred pesos a year for the church budget.

CHURCH FARMS IN SAMOA

The Methodist Church in the fourteen small Samoan Islands has 15,930 members, and seventy-one pastors and churches. Each church has an average-size farm of approximately ten acres. The members cultivate it by donated labor under the direction of the pastor. The income from the farm takes care of half the annual church budget. The small denomination also has two "plantations," one of eighty acres and the other of 150 acres. The income from these two plantations provides for the overhead expenses of their denomination. Men are appointed to work on these two plantations in the same way that a pastor of a church is appointed.

TANGANYIKA CHURCH FARMS

Nearly all of the three hundred preaching places or congregations of the Lutheran Church in Tanganyika have small church farms. They vary from a quarter of an acre to three acres. The members work together to cultivate them, raising grain sorghum with perhaps some peanuts. Incomes from these farms pay about one-fourth of the church budgets.

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This mission has a trained agriculturalist, R. W. Renner, who is planning to have one member of each of the congregations chosen to be the "Director of the Church Farm." These three hundred directors are then to be given some special training by Mr. Renner in crop rotation, seed selection, erosion control, disease and insect control, and the use of fertilizers. Not only will there be an increase in the church income, but the church farms will be demonstrations for the whole community in improved farm practices.

ADVANTAGES OF A CHURCH FARM

While there are chances for misunderstandings in operating a church farm, it also provides an excellent opportunity for teaching group stewardship. Where a pastor lives somewhat after the manner of his members, he has many new common interests with them. He is not only their pastor, but a neighbor as well.

The church farm is helping the younger churches to become self-supporting. One layman in East Asia, in discussing the constant and regular yearly income from a church farm instead of the occasional and often uncertain mission appropriation, explained the difference this way. He said, "Our rural churches need wells instead of only buckets of water."

In conclusion we find if a church farm is going to be successful, it must be administered for the purpose of building the kingdom and not simply for making money. A small church farm helps a pastor to live within his

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parish. It encourages long-term pastorates by giving added security. It gives pastors an opportunity to be more informed regarding the best agricultural methods and to introduce these improved farm practices into their parish. In a country like Africa, it provides for a great army of efficient unpaid lay preachers.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is meant for the whole man in his total environment. The best approach to any given village is by the simultaneous impact of the whole gospel upon the physical, mental, social, and spiritual life of the total community. The Lord's Acre plan and the church farm help to give this four-sided approach to our rural church.

Labor Gifts

The ways whereby a layman can contribute his labor to his church are almost limitless. Wherever a church must hire work done (or do without), that work can usually be contributed by some interested church member. In a survey of 341 rural churches in forty-four states, projects ranged from building new sidewalks, re-finishing floors and woodwork, and installing wiring to janitor work and weather stripping of church windows. Seventy-two different kinds of labor gifts were disclosed in the survey, accounting for a saving to the churches of \$280,578.

The writer was interested in the social values of labor gifts as well as in the money, and with the help of Joseph Scharer he devised a rating sheet that was cir-

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culated to the surveyed churches. The pastors were asked to rate their reported labor gifts as to fellowship value, value in creating church loyalty, enlisting workers for the church, helping low-income people to give to the church, and harmful aspects, if any.

Only a few typical examples can be discussed here in terms of their economic and social values.

BEAUTIFYING THE CHURCH GROUNDS

The laymen in forty-one churches, 12 per cent of those studied, voluntarily contributed their labor to beautify the church grounds. By this labor they each contributed \$9.94 in addition to their cash gifts. That is, they each increased their giving by this voluntary work 42 per cent.

Although the money value of voluntary labor in landscaping the church property was important, its main value was in creating a new loyalty to the church for the 291 different men who participated. They gained a new feeling that it was their church and that they were more a part of it. Thirty-three pastors reported on this particular value, none checking "poor," five checking "fair," eighteen checking "good," and ten checking "excellent." Among the projects it stood eleventh in order of importance.

Any group of men who wish to beautify their church grounds can get expert supervision. Trees can be placed at the rear of the grounds, and shrubs around the foundation. An open lawn could be planned for the front and

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perhaps a playground and picnic space at the rear. Some churches build picnic tables and a fireplace among the shade trees. A parking space can be a part of the plan. Bulletins on landscaping and often the services of landscape specialists can be obtained free from the county agent or from most state colleges of agriculture.

CONSTRUCTION AND IMPROVEMENTS

This deals with two types of labor, first, the construction of a new building, and second, the improvement of an old one.

Thirty-four of the churches surveyed by the author used voluntary labor in building a new church or parsonage or in putting on an addition to the old one. The estimated average cash value of such labor was \$1,845.57 per church, more than three times as high as any of the other items included in the study. This was an average contribution of \$79.31 per participant. This was much more than the cash gift of the average Protestant for the year.

This type of labor gift was also high in social values, ranking fifth. It developed fellowship, created loyalty, enlisted church workers, and gave people of low income a chance to contribute.

In Lexington, North Carolina, there is a rural congregation composed of workers in a mill where there has always been considerable job insecurity. But in a period of thirty-five years, this church has grown from a membership of eighty-eight to more than one thousand. The

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church building as been enlarged many times. Today there are two beautiful parsonages in which the two pastors live. The church playground accommodates five hundred children. This work could not have been accomplished without the loving gifts of many hours of donated labor. The congregation did much of its building by the contributed labor of its members. The pastor and people literally built with their own hands. They gave what little money they had, but most important of all, they gave their time and their labor.

One of the farmers said, as the men were completing their work on one of these churches, "I started with this work because I loved my church so deeply. Now, with all my work in it, I love it beyond expression."

PAINTING

The painting of the church or the parsonage is one of the most successful group projects. One-third of the 341 surveyed churches used it. The reports show that 886 men helped, saving for their churches \$10,734. A frame building needs painting approximately every five years. The labor of these men saved each of the 114 churches an average of \$116.67. Also, the men supplemented their cash gifts to the church by more than 50 per cent.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study began with the premise that our love for God and his church makes us want to give to him our time, our talents, and our money. We call this our stew-

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ardship. Each of these gifts supplements the others and should not take their place. We have seen how people give their time and their labor, as well as their money.

The pastors reported that the voluntary contributions of labor in 91 per cent of the cases had a good effect upon the community in general. Approximately four-fifths of the different types of labor included in this study were done by men. Constructing, improving, remodeling, and repairing the church and the parsonage, manse, or rectory included the major part of the labor gifts of the men in this survey. The men who did this more than doubled their total contributions to their churches.

This study points out a new approach to men's work in rural churches. The men did these jobs with great enthusiasm. Their pastors feel this is one way to increase the interest of men in the church. It is one way to get men started working. They start with manual labor which they know how to do and are accustomed to doing and later take on other church work. These labor gifts develop pride and loyalty within the individual for his church. If a group of men working together landscape the church grounds, plant shrubs around the foundation, level and seed the lawn, they thereby acquire a new interest. It becomes "their church."

LABOR GIFTS IN THE YOUNGER CHURCHES

As seen in the previous sections, money gifts in many of the developing countries present some real barriers to church support. But gifts of labor, as gifts of love, are

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very common. The experience of J. S. Q. Bakhsh, of West Pakistan, can be multiplied many times over.

The Rev. Mr. Bakhsh says that most of the churches, schools, and dispensaries in his area are built entirely with volunteer labor. In commenting on the general effects of the work of these laymen, Mr. Bakhsh says when the people in Pakistan build the church themselves, it means much more to them as a place of worship.

CHAPTER 8

PROBLEMS IN RURAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP



In the previous chapter we explored some stewardship methods; here we propose to examine a few ways that a small rural church can have leadership until such time as it becomes part of a larger unit—either a merged parish, or one of a group of co-operating churches. A part-time ministry is one answer, and will be considered in a section on the teacher-preacher. The use of lay preachers is another method. In more affluent societies, where the problem is one of attracting men to the ministry, minimum salary plans will be explored.

The Teacher-Preacher

In every country, some congregations are too new, or too small, or have incomes too low to pay their pastor an adequate salary. One way is for him to have a supplementary income from some other occupation, such as

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teaching. Teaching is particularly mentioned since seminary graduates can usually qualify as teachers with little difficulty. They also are brought into greater contact with their total community and with its young people, which strengthens the outreach of the church.

The use of the teacher-preacher is one of the ways to establish new churches, to strengthen weak congregations, and to provide a resident pastor and regular weekly services, where otherwise a congregation could have only a nonresident minister with services less often.

The use of the teacher-preacher is also one of the best ways in some countries to recruit new full-time pastors.

THE TEACHER-PREACHER IN INDIA

Note the report of D. Jacob, who is now the pastor of a church of more than a thousand members in Hyderabad, India:

"I began my career as a teacher-preacher. In our section there are a number of strategic centers where the pastor resides. Around him are six to eight villages, in each of which a teacher-preacher is working. Each of these teacher-preachers looks after the churches in approximately three villages. The teacher-preacher has charge of the village day school, the Sunday school, the Sunday worship service, and the youth organization in the church. He prepares the youth for church membership and conducts literacy classes for adults. He trains young people for Christian marriage. He usually is in

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charge of the big Christian festivals for the whole village. This method of having teacher-preachers has been very successful in many villages in my section of India."

James Lal, who is superintendent of a big rural district in northwest India, says the teacher-preacher helps to solve the shortage of ministers in his section. He feels the teacher-preacher has great advantages in the youth work of the church.

"The need for more preachers is discussed at every denominational annual meeting in my country," says J. S. Q. Bakhsh. "Speeches are made about the shortage of ministers. But on the last day of the meeting, many of the same churches are still left without ministers. The speeches did not help. We simply do not have enough trained ministers. The reason is very simple. The churches cannot supply the needed funds. The rural churches suffer most. They are not served, because they cannot pay a pastor. The teacher-preacher can help build small, illiterate village churches into large, going concerns that can support full-time trained pastors."

THE TEACHER-PREACHER IN THE UNITED STATES

The writer visited twenty outstanding Negro rural pastors of several denominations in the South, spending from one to three days on each field, to try to discover the basis for their success. Two-thirds of them were (or had been) teaching in the public schools of their parish. They served the youth of their families during the week in school and everybody on Sunday in church.

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These case studies showed that teaching gave the ministers a proper living, a chance to have an ideal home, and funds with which to give their children a college education. It also gave each pastor standing or recognition as a citizen of his whole community, not simply in his own denomination. It also gave him the opportunity for countywide leadership in the conflicts that precede every improvement in the South for his race. Moreover for five days a week, instead of one or two hours a week on Sunday, he has all of the youth of his parish under his influence.

Three-fourths of these twenty pastors, in school and in church, instruct their people in voting, encouraging them in citizenship.

Eighteen of these ministers are actively interested in helping their members own farms and homes. They help them obtain government loans. One pastor helped six of his families buy farms, another helped eight, and so on. One pastor helped thirty-three families buy land.

Because these pastors see their young people each day in school, they are doing much to help them go away to college. One of these pastors has sent fifty of his young people to college. In one community the entire last year's high school senior class is in college.

Eighteen of the twenty pastors have fought for school improvement from year to year. Fourteen of them led in the building of new school plants.

Half of these pastors have a monthly health clinic in their churches. One-third of them have a branch office

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of a county traveling library. One-fourth of these pastors have organized local credit unions that provide regular savings and loan facilities.

In view of the achievements just cited, it is clear that until economic conditions for Negro families in the rural South completely change, it would be desirable for young men, who want to serve their people, to prepare for this twofold ministry of a preacher-teacher.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The ministry is a full-time job. To do it adequately requires every minute of the day and every ounce of a man's strength. Even then, a conscientious pastor will leave things undone.

But a pastor must provide a living for his family. They must be adequately housed, clothed, fed, and educated. Where the congregation is too small or the income of the members is too low to support a pastor and his family, he must seek part-time work. There are some low-income areas in every country. Likewise, there are many churches or circuits with small memberships. The teacher-preacher plan seems to offer one of the best solutions to this need.

Lay Preachers

Lay preachers have certain characteristics that differentiate them from ordained ministers. They are not ordained. They do not administer the sacraments. They do not have as much training for the ministry as the regular

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tor. And lastly, the lay preacher has another occupation from which he earns his living, so he preaches without pay.

The number of trained, ordained workers is insufficient among the older churches in America and Canada, there is even a greater need for laymen to preach among the younger churches. If the world is ever to be evangelized, the laymen must help. The income among people of most of the younger churches is insufficient to support enough trained, ordained ministers. The trained ministers in those countries such as Asia and Africa are far behind with their task, and they need the help of lay preachers to serve in many unchurched areas. Also, there are new housing developments, mission stations, and small congregations in America that need preaching of unpaid laymen.

MEN PREACH IN AUSTRALIA

Norman Young is the pastor of five rural churches which provide nine regular services a week for the sheep-ers in Southern Australia. He preaches three times a Sunday, does the pastoral work on the entire circuit, and conducts a prayer meeting on Wednesday night. The other five services in his circuit are conducted by his eight lay preachers. These eight men include six farmers, a postmaster, and a mechanic who runs the local garage.

This is a rural area. Four out of five of the ministers in rural circuits like Young's. Each pastor has an

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average of five lay preachers to help conduct the services on the circuit. These ordained ministers all receive the same salary.

The lay preachers pay their own travel expenses and receive no salaries. They say they preach "for the love of the Lord."

THE TONGA ISLANDS

Only 1,998 miles northeast of Australia are the Tonga Islands, where the church also uses laymen as preachers. The latest figures from the Tonga Islands show 94 per cent of all adults are "active" Christians. They define "active" as a person who attends three religious services on Sunday. Lay preachers helped to build this percentage and are among the most influential people on the islands. Even the Queen's sons are lay preachers.

LAY PREACHERS IN KOREAN CHURCHES

As one flies northwest from Samoa seven thousand miles toward the mainland of Asia, he comes to what has been one of the fastest growing churches in the world, the Korean church. Here also one finds many unpaid lay preachers. Some circuits contain as many as twenty-six preaching places with three ministers and thirty-five to forty lay preachers. Through this system of using lay preachers, trained men are able to accomplish more. Money goes farther. Places are reached that otherwise would be neglected. Laymen are trained. Men are recruited for the ministry, and the gospel is preached.

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FILIPINO LAY PREACHERS

"During the eighteen years of my ministry in the Philippines," says Jose R. Raguindin, "lay preachers have been a tremendous help. They have been the ones to open new preaching places. They start extension Sunday schools in new *barrios*. From these a preaching place is started, then after one or two years a church is organized. The church on the little island where I was born was started that way. Now we have eleven congregations with seven pastors. We conduct schools in lay visitation evangelism. In the morning the laymen meet in classes. In the afternoon they visit in the homes of the unchurched. Then in the evening we all gather together and we discuss our day's experiences."

LAYMEN EVANGELIZE IN MEXICO

The writer once visited a Presbyterian parish in Mexico where lay preachers had helped to build up a great rural parish of twenty-five preaching centers. Pastor Romanos Torres, of Valles, tried to give his laymen a personal religious experience that they could share with others. It all started when a man came to him one day and said, "Mr. Torres, a meeting only once in two weeks in our village is too little. We need a meeting at least three times a week. I want you to teach me how to preach. Furthermore, when I go out to the ranches on business, I want to be able to preach to the people there."

Mr. Torres decided to train his laymen to preach.

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Classes were held in Bible study and in the art of preaching. The number of lay preachers increased rapidly. They not only preached, but they organized Sunday schools, young people's societies, and women's organizations. Mr. Torres was scarcely able to keep up with his program of gospel extension. Twenty-five churches or preaching centers were organized. These workers traveled on horseback, usually far off the main lines of communication. A dozen lay ministers were soon conducting regular services throughout the region. They traveled from ranch to ranch and village to village and before long they had more than five hundred baptized members and as many more children.

CUBAN LAY READERS

The Episcopal Church in Cuba makes very effective use of lay preachers. A recent report of the Diocese of Cuba listed twenty-five ordained ministers, but thirty-eight lay readers were also given. These lay readers come from the larger and more active churches. Two of these thirty-eight laymen are medical doctors, and one is a teacher. They are all influential men. Bishop A. H. Blankingship is enthusiastic about the quality of work done by these thirty-eight laymen in his diocese.

LAYMEN IN AFRICA

There are twenty-three ordained ministers and 188 lay preachers in one northern Rhodesian denomination.

"These lay preachers are an indispensable part of our

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church life and organization," according to Rev. Kenneth Johnson, a missionary at Chisamba.

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church, located in southeast Ghana, has seventy thousand members and 294 congregations. These 294 congregations are organized into 23 circuits, with a trained, ordained minister in charge of each. But a lay preacher is in charge of each of the congregations when the ordained minister is busy elsewhere on his large circuit.

Noah K. Dzobo, one of these lay preachers, says that he and most of the others have been given at least a year's training by their church, and that most of them earn their living by teaching and are paid for their teaching by the government.

"We do every type of service in the church," Mr. Dzobo reports, "except administer the communion and conduct weddings. We carry on the day-to-day work of the church."

On the Mhandla circuit in Mozambique, the pastor has the help of nineteen unpaid lay preachers. With their help Bento Sales is able to care for thirty-four places of worship. The success of this plan in Mozambique is due in part to the fact that lay preachers are trained at the same place and by the same teachers as the ordained ministers. All are trained together for three years. Then from these three-year graduates are selected the men who are to study for three more years and become ordained ministers. In both schools, the wives are trained along with their husbands.

PROBLEMS IN RURAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

LAY PREACHERS IN INDIA

Two of Pastor Joseph John's five churches in South India are now run by laymen. He says, "Lay or voluntary leadership, working with Indian-paid leadership, is the only hope of the future church in India."

One reason why laymen find it easier to preach in the younger churches than in Canada or in the United States is because the sermons in the younger churches are largely "Bible talks." They emphasize "What the Bible says" more than they do the minister's philosophy or theology. For new Christians in a non-Christian area, Bible talks are an important foundation for their faith.

D. P. Titus, pastor of a Methodist church in Kanpur, tells of the use he makes of his ten lay preachers:

"During week days they work in mills, offices, or schools. On Sundays, two of them conduct extension Sunday schools. One of them preaches regularly in an unchurched area. Each month a different one conducts one of the preaching services in our church. Last year we had thirty-two funerals in our church, and our lay preachers took ten of these. During the forty days of Lent, some of them spoke each day at cottage meetings."

James Lal says that self-support is much emphasized throughout India today. He feels that the only way for the Indian church to pay its trained pastors a living wage is for each of them to have the help of several unpaid lay preachers, men who earn their living by other means, but who voluntarily assist their pastor so he can thereby serve a larger parish.

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PREACHERS IN THE UNITED STATES

Lay preachers in America were contacted by the writer and his students in twenty different states. These preachers represented sixty-two occupations or professions. There were fifteen school teachers, ten farmers, life insurance agents, and on through the list.

Of this group of 122 lay preachers, the Episcopalians are younger. Their average age was thirty-five years, Baptists, fifty, and the Methodists, fifty-one years. Only 40 per cent of the Baptists accept no pay, 67 per cent of the Methodists come in this unpaid class, and 82 per cent of the Episcopalians. The latter denomination began using lay readers in America in 1884 when the western migration was at its height. They report a steady increase of approximately a hundred new lay readers each year since that date.

The Department of Town and Country of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. began a new service for its lay preachers in 1956. Sermons, along with a complete order of worship, are prepared and sent out regularly to about five hundred Presbyterian lay preachers. This denomination often has as many as 1,500 churches without a regular installed pastor, therefore the help of lay preachers is greatly needed.

MARY

The plan of using unpaid lay preachers and thereby organizing circuits is one of the great needs of our rural church throughout the world. As a rule laymen are will-

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ing to give their service. They are seeking this type of Christian service. But they need to be recruited, trained, and supervised by their pastor.

Minimum Salaries

There are two conflicting policies regarding the support of nearly all social or religious workers. One is the "sink or swim" philosophy, sometimes called "rugged individualism" or "free enterprise." "You pay for what you get, and you get only what you pay for," according to this policy. But this policy is changing in all American social institutions. More people are believing that you pay for what you get, and you also help others to get as good as you have.

THE CHURCH NEEDS MINIMUM SALARIES

In the church we also find two different points of view. The one is that the little local rural church should assume entire financial responsibility for the salary of its pastor, regardless of the size of its membership. This idea in the church does not differ greatly from the idea people held regarding the old neighborhood post office, the old village library, the old township quarantine officer, the old graded dirt road, or the one-teacher district school.

The other point of view is that some financial responsibility belongs to the whole denomination or to some larger unit of it, such as a conference, synod, or diocese, and not entirely to the local church.

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The principle of establishing a minimum salary for pastors is growing. It is the expression of a desire to equalize religious privilege for all. People ask for the opportunity to "share" their religious faith.

WHY LOCAL SALARIES ARE DIFFERENT

The incomes in adjoining parishes differ greatly. An illustration will show how various factors determine the amount of salary a church can pay. In Union County, South Carolina, the writer visited two Methodist churches in 1946. They were only three miles apart. Foster's Chapel, with a nice brick church, had 215 members. Flat Rock, with an old, unpainted frame building, had a membership of fifty. Why so much difference?

Foster's Chapel is located on a relatively level area. Flat Rock, only three miles away, is on the edge of a ridge where the slopes are much steeper, and consequently the farms are more severely eroded. The farms around Foster's Chapel have held the topsoil. The good soil around Flat Rock has been washed away.

Eleven years after the writer's visit, the church at Flat Rock was dead. The general poverty of its tenant farmer congregation had made the support of this little rural church impossible.

MINIMUM SALARIES IN SCOTLAND

In 1929 the State Church of Scotland united with the United Free Church and became the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. At the time of the union, the new

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united church adopted a minimum salary plan. A recent report gives 2,652 charges in the church, and 766 of these, slightly more than one-fourth, receive money from this fund to bring the salaries up to the minimum. This has made it possible to send ministers to parishes that would be unable to have pastoral service otherwise.

By establishing a minimum salary for every minister in the church, it is easier to have a minimum educational standard. The minimum requirement in Scotland is that a pastor must be a graduate of a college and a theological seminary. Ministers refuse to vote a man into the presbytery who does not have necessary educational qualifications, since they will be obligated to help maintain for him a minimum salary during his entire ministry.

In many other countries, since the small rural churches cannot pay for the best-trained men, they get what the larger churches do not want or cannot use. But not so in Scotland. Often the very best men are in the rural churches. There is not the temptation for them to move to get an increase in salary. Many stay from ten to twenty years in one parish. One never hears of a "rural church problem" in Scotland.

MINIMUM SALARY IN AMERICA

The minimum salary plan in America has had a history of only twenty-eight years, and there is one serious weakness in all minimum salary plans of the present day. The plans are generally good as far as they have gone, but they have not gone far enough. They have helped

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supplement many salaries, but they have not helped enough. The minimum has usually been too low.

Into nearly every rural community, miscellaneous disorganized families are rapidly moving at the present time. These new families greatly need the services of the church. About one person in every seven of the rural farm population and one in four of the rural non-farm people are newcomers to some rural parish each year. These newcomers are in the country but often are not of it. They are neither urban nor rural. They constitute a new challenge to the rural church as well as a new evangelistic opportunity. The large city and town churches that sent them out into the country need to help support the rural pastors who serve these newcomers until they are assimilated into rural church constituencies.

THE YOUNGER CHURCHES

The problem of low salaries for national pastors is much more acute among the younger churches. The teaching of stewardship is only in its early stages.

The Malaya Methodist Conference has a committee on social and economic relations that has developed a minimum salary plan. It divides its pastors into three groups according to their training and sets a definite salary scale for each group. Chaik Ghee Ong, one of the ministers of this conference, reports the salaries for 1958: conference course of study graduates \$300; college graduates \$350 plus \$7,000 insurance; seminary graduates \$450 plus \$15,000 insurance.

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In addition to the salaries, the conference provides all school tuition fees for the pastor's children.

James Lal, commenting on conditions in his Methodist district in northwest India, says that most of his village pastors get approximately twelve dollars a month. "You will always find the preacher in debt," he explains. "Preachers' children are not educated. Most of the time some of his children are sick. He can't get more support because his members are day laborers. Very few of them own land. We very much need a minimum salary plan in our conference in India."

We are told by the Rev. Nobuya Utsunomiya that pastors' salaries in the United Church of Japan range from \$15 to \$130 per month. "How can we do social work among needy people when we have suffering ministers within our own church?" are his words.

Kenneth Choto says his denomination in Southern Rhodesia has a standard or minimum salary both for its pastors and its teachers in the church-related village schools. He explains that the city pastors are given an extra allowance for garden food and for stovewood, which is available everywhere for the rural pastors.

Dr. Richard Comfort commented on this subject after his return from West Pakistan:

The salaries of most ministers in Pakistan are low by our standards, since many of them receive only 70 rupees a month (\$15). The more highly paid pastors receive as much as from 250 to 300 rupees. Some of the denominations are considering the establishment of a minimum salary of 100

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rupees, which is what many school teachers in that country receive. But East and West are much alike in one respect—many business and professional people receive higher salaries than ministers and teachers. In Pakistan, as in the United States, the village pastor usually has a manse or parsonage furnished free, receives a few fees for professional services, and sometimes is given wheat and rice by his parishioners. I felt that village pastors in West Pakistan had more financial problems than most of the town and country pastors in the United States.¹

SUMMARY

A minimum salary plan is needed in each denomination, not only in the United States and Canada, but also among the younger churches. It helps to provide an adequate pastoral ministry for low-income people. It meets the needs of the newcomers who are not yet supporters of the church. It provides adequate support for the pastor's family, especially for those pastors who serve in difficult fields. It makes possible longer pastorates. It tends to raise the educational standard of ministers. It practices the spirit of brotherhood, which is at the heart of the gospel we preach.

¹ Comfort, Richard O., "The Village Church in West Pakistan" in the *Town and Country Church*, Sept., 1957.

CHAPTER 9

SPECIALIZED TRAINING FOR RURAL PASTORS



The rural pastor is the one man who, more than any other person, determines the future of the rural church. His effectiveness depends largely upon how he is trained.

In order to appreciate the importance of his specialized rural training, we might watch three brothers who were reared in the same home, attended the same school and church, were influenced by the same parents and community agencies, and then received entirely different training. One studied medicine, another agriculture, and the third prepared himself to become a mining engineer. Because of their specialized training, one is at home with the sick in the crowded halls of a hospital, one is happy alone in a field or barn, and the third is just as happy in a deep mine or in a lonely desert camp. It's their training that makes them happy and efficient in their work. The same is true of the rural pastor.

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MORE PASTORS NEEDED FOR RURAL WORK

The rapid trend toward industrialization in America is apt to make us forget our rural population, approximately 17 million rural people. We still need a lot of pastors trained to serve the rural church in America. When we look at the younger churches, we find the rural needs there very much greater. In Asia and Africa, nearly three people out of every four are engaged in agriculture. This percentage of farmers goes above 90 per cent in some countries. All people need the service of the church, but there are many more rural people, and they need the services of pastors with specialized rural training.

Rural Training in the United States

At the present time, more than half of all the accredited seminaries in the United States offer special courses dealing with the rural church. More than half of these schools have the full-time services of one or more rural instructors. This means that twenty-three seminaries have a rural church department with one or more professors giving full-time to the rural church.

STUDENT PARISHES ARE RURAL LABORATORIES

Thirty years ago automobiles in America came into general use, making possible student pastorates. Most seminary students now travel by car to their parishes on the weekend.

Another important change is the large number of married students that often makes a student pastorate a

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financial necessity. Married students in leading seminaries rose from 15 per cent in 1935, to 36 per cent in 1955, to 60 per cent in 1957.¹

Out of each hundred student pastorates, approximately ninety of them are in rural churches. These student churches mean not only a source of income, but an excellent teaching opportunity.

The supervisor of field work, the rural church instructor, and the teachers of homiletics and pastoral work use the student parishes for practical demonstrations. The student pastor is visited each year. In some cases the student's sermon is recorded and later discussed with him. Most student pastors are required to attend weekly or monthly counseling sessions. These student rural parishes are excellent teaching laboratories.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Most teachers of rural courses supervise rural research projects by their students. At first the students make simple parish surveys, study population trends, and mark out parish boundaries. As the student progresses, these change to larger research projects that frequently are published and widely used. Ten typical seminaries during a four-year period published thirty-one research studies, or nearly an average of one per year for each school. Some rural church departments give more attention to graduate work and hence to still more original and important research.

¹ *Time Magazine*, Apr. 28, 1958, p. 71.

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SOME TYPICAL RURAL COURSES

The courses offered in most rural departments fall into two general groups. First, there are those that will help the student understand rural life. These include such courses as rural sociology, rural community organizations, rural psychology, and often elementary agriculture. A minister who is seeking to spiritualize rural life must know something about it. The second group of courses deals with rural church methods or administration. These are simply an adaptation of a well-rounded church program to meet specific rural needs.

Here are some typical rural courses offered by one seminary, Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Illinois, which seem fairly typical of all schools: The Sociology of Rural Life, Agricultural Economics for the Rural Minister, Rural Church Surveys, the People and the Land, the Program of the Rural Church, Social Welfare and the Rural Community, and Rural Church Administration.

COURSES IN AGRICULTURE

The Theological Seminary at Dubuque, Iowa, probably comes nearer than almost any other school to giving the rural church the emphasis it needs. Many of its graduates become rural pastors. Instead of trying to include elective courses on the rural church in an already overcrowded program of required courses, it has a "Division of Practical Theology and Rural Church" with two instructors, Calvin T. Schnucker and William Jamison.

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In addition to the courses offered by these two teachers, the seminary provides three courses at Iowa State College of Agriculture, Ames, Iowa. They are: Agronomy (crop production and soil management), Animal Husbandry (general livestock production), and General Agriculture.

Dubuque Seminary arranged with the Iowa State College to offer these courses in 1944. Since then, five other midwestern seminaries have sent their students to Ames for these summer agricultural courses. A total of 145 seminary students have received this nontechnical agricultural training. In addition to these three courses, they have been given special lectures, demonstrations, and field trips.

The Division of Town and Country of the Protestant Episcopal Church renders a unique type of service to its ten seminaries. It provides six rural training centers during the three summer months, to which the seminaries send their students for instruction and field supervision in rural work. Approximately 10 per cent of the total enrollment participates in this program. Since its inception in 1945, a total of 490 seminary students, and sixty women in training for church work, as well as fifteen Army Chaplain trainees have completed these rural courses.

Another seminary where rural church classes are integrated into the school program is the Theological Seminary of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, at Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Dr. Alfred C. Bartholomew,

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professor of rural church work, gives one required course, while his other courses are electives in the Department of Practical Theology.

A professor of rural church work can often give a practical emphasis to the entire curriculum of the seminary, as does Garland A. Hendricks, of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, North Carolina. In addition to his regular rural church courses, Hendricks has a special course, required for all juniors, which he calls "Field Work." One-third of the time is spent in studying rural churches. One-third is devoted to class discussion dealing with rural church problems. The remaining one-third is given to visits from outstanding rural workers, who speak and answer questions from the students.

Training for Leadership in the Developing Countries

Most of the rural people outside of North America live in villages and cultivate the surrounding fields. The younger churches speak of "the village church" instead of "the rural church."

Rural pastors in these areas need to be partially self-supporting. Often they get as much as 70 per cent of their family living from their own farm or garden. As a rule their farms can be a demonstration to the entire community, Christian and non-Christian alike, of better farm methods. Lay preachers, too, in practically all of the younger churches, are entirely self-supporting. The church enterprise is much larger among the developing

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countries of the world because the pastors and lay workers are not entirely dependent on the church.

But this matter of self-support is not an accident. They are trained that way, along with their seminary work.

RURAL TRAINING IN JAPAN

The Japan Christian Rural Service and Training Center is located at Tsurukawa, a rural area near Tokyo. The students studying for the rural ministry live and work on the twenty-five acre tract.

The continuance of their rural life experiences while at school maintains the students' rural-mindedness. The students attend classes in the morning and work on the farm in the afternoon. They not only get practical experience but they care for the major expenses of their training. This is necessary because most of these men come from small farms and have almost no financial resources.

The students take ten courses in Bible, nine in Christian doctrine, three in church history, three in religious education, besides their courses in homiletics and pastoral work. The specialized rural courses include: dairying, poultry raising, vegetable gardening, fruit raising, and animal husbandry.

In another seminary in Japan, each student is required to do physical work for at least eighteen hours per week. The first-year student spends his working time on the farm. Here he learns how to raise his own vegetables and grains. His second year he works in the woodwork shop, where he learns to build and repair his own house and

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furniture. He spends his third year working in the health-food factory, learning how to improve rural diets, and how to make certain health foods. His last year is elective as to the type of work. The churches served by these graduates are nearly all self-supporting or on the road to self-support.

MEXICO TRAINS RURAL PASTORS

The Union Seminary in Mexico City is probably the only school among the younger churches that has as many as three teachers in its rural church department. This seminary also carries on an effective rural extension program, conducting institutes of from one to six weeks in rural churches throughout Mexico.

RURAL TRAINING IN AFRICA

The Emmanuel Theological Seminary, Bela Vista, Angola, run by the United Church of Canada and the American Board, illustrates how well a training program can be co-ordinated with the actual life of the church. The ministers are trained in two schools, first in Currie Institute, and then in Emmanuel Seminary. In Currie all students have instruction and practice in agriculture and handicrafts. For their field work, the students are taken out for what they call "movable schools." They spend from one to two weeks in each village, learning by the demonstration method what a Christian village should be.

The theological seminary of the Disciples of Christ at Bolenge, the Belgian Congo, has a five-year course—four

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years of study and a year of in-service training between the second and third years, when the men received supervised, practical experience.

It offers nine year-long Bible courses and the usual courses in church history, theology, and pastoral care. In view of the fact that much of the living of these pastors later comes from their own gardens, the seminary students are given a course in agriculture during each of the four years. Other courses in the practical field include hygiene, music, science, religious education, stewardship, first aid, and Christian home life.

Every student has a garden plot and is taught the fundamentals of how to get the most out of the soil. These graduates not only have good gardens, but also plant fruit trees around their houses. Every yard has banana plants growing in it. Many of these seminary graduates in the smaller villages gain as much as 40 per cent of their living from their gardens. Moreover their gardens become demonstration plots for their neighbors.

The Bugema Missionary College of the Seventh Day Adventists, Uganda, has a similar self-support program. The seminary students come as families, so that the family as a whole can be trained and sent out to their churches to demonstrate what a Christian family can do.

Each of the families is given one and one-half acres of land, from which they support themselves partially in the first year and totally in their second year. The course of study is similar to that in many seminaries, except for the specialized family training for rural work.

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RURAL MINISTERS TRAINED TO LIVE IN THE COUNTRY

The Mennonites in Puerto Rico also train ministers to live in the country. In addition to the usual curriculum, they offer fourteen courses in what they call "arts and crafts." These courses include general agriculture, carpentry, mechanics, library science, dairying, horticulture, vegetable gardening, domestic science, shorthand, electricity, music, dietetics, care of the sick, and sewing. By their work in the vegetable plots, the students are able to pay for nearly all of their expenses for meals and lodging while in school.

Knowledge of these arts and crafts helps the rural pastor later in his task of improving the rural communities. They also help him support his family, making it possible for him to live and work in a rural parish.

SUMMARY

Some of the other many seminaries with practical courses for training rural pastors include the Union Seminary of the Philippines, in Manila; the Methodist Theological Seminary, in São Paulo, Brazil; the Near East School of Theology, in Beirut, Lebanon; the Baptist Seminary, in Iloilo, Philippines; and the Kambini Training School, in Mozambique. These seminaries are closely related to the life of their churches.

It should be explained that many more seminaries among the younger churches would like to offer these practical and necessary courses, but they do not have enough teachers, especially those with rural training.

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"In Africa," says Pastor Kenneth Choto, whose words have universal application, "the home of the rural Rhodesian pastor is like sunshine in the darkness. He is the eyes of his people. His garden and fields are planted in proper rotation. His poultry is the best. He teaches his parishioners how to make compost pits and enrich the soil. Homes are cleaned up and simple health care is practiced. The community becomes one big happy family."

The effectiveness of the rural pastor depends largely upon how he is trained.

CHAPTER 10

NEW MINISTERS AND MISSIONARIES



The great ministers of the past do not preach to the present generation. We always need new ministers and new missionaries. But where do they come from?

Although 63 per cent of the people in the United States are carried on some church roll, only half of this number are in church on an average Sunday. This means that two out of every three are not now being reached.

Among the developing countries of the world, nearly 700 million people in twenty-two nations have gained their independence during the past fifteen years. More than anything else, the people of these new independent nations now need a new Christian motivation for life. They need to learn about the economic justice and social equality that the gospel of Christ brings. It will take many new Christian ministers and missionaries to bring this message to so many people.

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We thank God for the younger churches in those lands, but they need much more help than they are getting. In Korea, the Philippines, and parts of Africa, the church is strong. But India is only 3 per cent Christian, China 1 per cent, and Japan slightly more than $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Of the 18 million people in Thailand, only fifty thousand are Christians.

There are two great schools of thought today competing for the allegiance of the people in depressed areas in all the countries of the world. These are communism and Christianity. Wherever people are poor, the Communists are there seeking new recruits.

In Pastor Joseph John's parish in South India, the Communists sent in a representative every year to get converts. The last Communist to come was a man named Ponnusamy, who was so impressed by what he saw that he was converted to Christianity. He is now one of the most active workers in the church. Pastor John has improved agriculture, established a health clinic, and organized a co-operative to help people get out of debt and to buy their own land. He is proving that "the pulpit and the plow" can win over "the hammer and the sickle."

This is one of the new opportunities presented to the rural church in every country in the world, to show people that Christianity makes greater changes in people's lives than communism can. But this will take many more Christian ministers and missionaries than we now have.

This chapter will deal specifically with the recruitment of new ministers and missionaries.

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A Study of Ministerial Motivation in the United States

A study was made by the writer, with the help of William Calkins, to determine the factors that influence young men to become ministers, or that keep men out of the ministry. Information was obtained from 1,978 ministerial students. These men came from forty-eight states, and represented twenty of the major denominations. Fifty-seven theological seminaries and church-related colleges were contacted.

A pilot survey was first conducted among 566 ministerial students. This revealed the various phases of the problem and provided an opportunity for perfecting an instrument for the larger study. The final survey contained eighty-three questions or subjects from which information was obtained.

PEOPLE WHO INFLUENCE A YOUNG MAN TO ENTER THE MINISTRY

The ministerial students were each asked who influenced them to enter the ministry. Thirteen choices were given, and space was provided for additional listings. Where there was more than one person who especially influenced them, the students were asked to rate them first, second, and third in order of importance. The result is shown in Table I of this chapter.

In discussing Table I, let us look at the least influential person first—the vocational guidance teacher. The high school age is the critical age for decision; 63 per cent

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TABLE I

PEOPLE WHO INFLUENCED STUDENTS TO ENTER THE MINISTRY

<i>Persons</i>	<i>Percentage of cases</i>
1. Pastor	34.0
2. Mother	17.4
3. Father	11.2
4. Evangelist	6.4
5. College teacher	5.8
6. Sunday school teacher	5.0
7. Missionary	4.3
8. College friend	4.3
9. Wife	3.9
10. Girl friend	2.5
11. High school teacher	2.3
12. High school friend	2.1
13. Vocational guidance teacher	.8
	<hr/> 100.0

indicated they first thought of entering the ministry before they completed high school. Yet the table shows that the high school vocational guidance teacher failed sadly in guiding boys toward the ministry. Here is one place for improvement in the co-operation between the high school and the church. Pastors could render greater assistance to vocational guidance teachers.

It should be explained regarding the influence of a "girl friend" that while she scored only 2.5 per cent in influencing a young man for the ministry, her score as a retarding factor, as shown in a later section, was only 0.9 per cent. Her influence was more positive than negative. The reason for the low score of "the wife" is because

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very few of the students were married when they made their decision.

Numbers 4, 5, 6, and 7 in Table I give an opportunity for an interesting comparison. The missionary and the evangelist, whom the students seldom see, provide a total score of 10.7 per cent. The Sunday school teacher and the college teacher, whom the students see every week or perhaps every day, provide a total score of only 10.8 per cent. The evangelist challenges the student to a new and full religious experience. He gives God a better chance to call the student. He helps the young man to put God first in his plans for his life's work. The missionary presents to the student the great needs of the developing countries of the world. He calls the young man to a life of difficult service in hard places.

Both of these persons call the student to high adventure. Neither offers material rewards. Neither emphasizes "a good job" with "easy hours" or "comfortable salary."

As one compares the influence of these four persons, he cannot help asking whether the Sunday school teacher and the college teacher are missing a great opportunity. This is a particularly relevant question when we recall that approximately 90 per cent of these ministerial students attended church-related colleges or denominational schools.

There is no problem of the "separation of church and state" in a Christian college, as there might be in high school. The church is asked to support these colleges because of their Christian influence. In another section we

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will find that the second highest in the list of hindrances or retarding factors was the "lack of counseling or guidance." The teacher in a Christian college has an excellent opportunity to do this counseling, but in most cases he is apparently doing very little, or nothing.

The teaching and example of a boy's parents exert a great influence in directing him into the ministry. Mothers usually have the greater influence on a child in his earlier years, and, as Table I shows, this counts the most. Her influence is 17.4 per cent, while the father's is 11.2 per cent. The real influence of the average father in this matter is complicated by the fact that 15 per cent of these ministerial students were sons of ministers.

The fact that the pastor ranked highest, 34.0 per cent, in influencing men to enter the ministry is important. The boy needed guidance, and his pastor gave it. The young man wanted to know more about the actual work that a minister does, and his minister told him.

In considering the persons who influence young men to enter the ministry, it may not be important to make a comparison among them, but rather to emphasize the need for all Christians to hold up the ministry as a challenging lifework.

RETARDING FACTORS

The ministerial students were then asked to indicate the things that had a tendency to keep them from entering the ministry. It was felt that if these limiting factors could be located, they could, to some extent, be removed.

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The students were asked to "indicate factors which retarded or inhibited your decision." Ten such well-known factors were listed, and a blank space was given for others of the student's own choosing. It was assumed there might be more than one "retarding factor." Therefore, the students were also asked to check three factors, ranking them first, second, and third in their order of importance. Table II gives this information.

TABLE II
FACTORS THAT RETARDED DECISION TO ENTER
THE MINISTRY

<i>Retarding Factors</i>	<i>Percentage of cases</i>
1. Lack of Bible knowledge and a feeling of unworthiness	32.1
2. Lack of counseling or guidance	19.5
3. Financial obligations at home	11.1
4. Lack of knowledge about the work a minister does	10.9
5. Lack of knowledge about the need of the church for ministers	9.9
6. Parents encouraged sons to select other work	5.0
7. Low salary of ministers	4.3
8. Discouragement from friends	4.2
9. Parental objection	2.1
10. Discouragement from girl friend	0.9
	<hr/> 100.0

As one studies the table, he soon discovers that the first five factors are the responsibilities of the adults, that is, of the church and its pastor, of the teachers of youth, and of the parents of the prospective minister. Many young men do not enter the ministry because no one has

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shown them why and how. No one has counseled with them or guided them in that direction. Their pastors, their parents, and their teachers have not shown enough active interest in the matter. It is interesting to note that 83.5 per cent of the factors that keep men out of the ministry, numbers 1 to 5 in the above table, are simply because no person, no agency, no organization, no pastor, or no parent is doing enough to seek to enlist them.

God is still calling men into the ministry, but young men cannot understand that call without more help from parents, pastors, and others, as we see from the table.

One student summarized the attitudes of many in these words, "If my Sunday school teacher and my pastor had made the Bible and its teachings live for me more, I would not have had such a long period of indecision. Once I saw the relevance of its message, it set me on fire."

Another student said, "My decision to enter the ministry would never have been made had not the pastor suggested it to me. He planted the idea. I think that most men must have it suggested to them, especially young men."

Numbers 4 and 5 in Table II are similar. Almost any pastor in America could give this information to his young men. Yet 20.8 per cent of these respondents indicated that they had not had enough information about the "needs of the church for more ministers" or definite "knowledge of what a minister does." Surely all would agree that it is the responsibility of the church to make known its need for more ministers.

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One sometimes hears such a statement as "Our young women keep more men out of the ministry than any other one thing." Item 10 in the table does not indicate this. Only seven of the young men surveyed checked their girl friend first as a "retarding factor." This seems conclusive enough.

A study of Table II clearly shows that one great need is more emphasis upon explaining to our youth the need of the church for their services and the need of the world for the Christian gospel.

REASONS FOR ENTERING THE MINISTRY

As in the other questions, the men were given a list of possible reasons for entering the ministry and were asked to check their first, second, and third choices. The composite scores and percentages were tabulated, and the results are shown in Table III.

TABLE III
REASONS FOR ENTERING THE MINISTRY

<i>List of Reasons</i>	<i>Percentage of cases</i>
1. Definite call of God	38.0
2. Need of men and society for Christ	31.1
3. To serve mankind	26.0
4. Some special event such as illness or danger	1.7
5. Desire to be a professional man	1.3
6. Barred from other work by circumstances	1.3
7. Desire for social standing	.4
8. Failure in school in another field	.2
	<hr/> 100.0

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Numbers 4 to 8 in the above table seem quite insignificant, and one might ask why they were included in this study. While they are unimportant, they have been much publicized. Some who go out of their way to criticize ministers say they could not succeed elsewhere, or that they simply want to be leaders, or that they are in the ministry because it gives them social standing. The table shows that all of these reasons, numbers 4 to 8, are insignificant.

According to the survey, men enter the ministry because they believe God calls them, because they see the great need of men and society for Christ, and because they want to serve mankind.

All would agree that the minister needs the call of God. But what is a "call"? How can a young man know he is called? Many remain for years at a point of indecision, because they are not sure they are being called. The following statement from a young ministerial student from Montana is an example of this:

"For years I have felt, and still do, that I am unworthy and terribly inadequate to serve Christ as a full-time minister. Always I have had the idea that if I were going to go into the ministry I would receive a definite call, something I was sure of and that was specific. It has never come even yet, but now I feel that it is a mistake for all people to expect such a definite call before giving their lives to his service. No sooner had I definitely made up my mind and prepared my future accordingly than it was as if a big worry were suddenly taken away."

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No two students seemed to agree as to how the call comes and for most students, the call is a gradual process. One ministerial student described his experience:

"I cannot say that I had a definite call. My call has been a gradual process. When I graduated from high school I was not even going to college, although I had no other plans. I met a camp counselor who persuaded me to attend college. Ever since I was at that camp, missions and the ministry were foremost in my mind, and ever since then 'the call' has continued to grow stronger until now I am sure."

One ministerial student from North Carolina defined his call thus: "I mean by a definite call from God a continual urge and an inward feeling of dissatisfaction with any other field of work."

Our study points out that God is still calling men into the ministry, but that each one is called a little differently, and each one needs help in interpreting that call.

A call is a combination of situations and factors, of personality traits and abilities, of understanding and devotion. A young man needs to be sincerely consecrated. He must have a genuine desire to help people. He must realize that the gospel of Christ has power to change lives. This study shows that practically every young man needs his pastor or someone else to help him to recognize and to understand a call when it comes.

In Table III, giving the reasons why the men decided on the ministry, the second listing was the "need of men and society for Christ."

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Testimonies of some of the ministerial students illustrate how these young men discovered the need for Christ in the lives of men. One young man from Pennsylvania stated:

"My decision has come from seeing how young men behaved when I was in the United States Navy. I realized then that there was a great need in society for men of strong Christian principles. The more I have seen and learned, the more I am drawn into the service of God and man through Christ."

A student from South Carolina related a similar experience:

"My time in the service (forty-five months) definitely proved to me the great need for ministers in our world. I was more convinced than ever before that I had been called to give my all for God."

But while God is calling, one must be receptive. Along with the sense of need of man and society for Christ, there must be a desire to win men to Christ. Behind the desire to serve mankind, there must be a sense of consecration and humility.

WHEN STUDENTS FIRST CONSIDER THE MINISTRY

Two questions were asked each ministerial student regarding the time he decided to enter the ministry. Give: "Your class in school when you first thought of entering the ministry"; and "Your class in school when you definitely decided to enter the ministry."

The high school years were discovered to be the de-

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cisive ones for leading our boys toward the ministry. No other period of time compares to the three years of senior high school. One-third of the total surveyed group became interested in the ministry within this three-year period. The junior high school period was the next most important time. The home and the local church start these boys thinking about the ministry.

It was in the junior and senior high school period of six years that 51 per cent of the boys say they began thinking of entering the ministry. In the four years of college, only 19 per cent were influenced.

This study reveals the fact that the decision to enter the ministry was not an event, but a process. Approximately nine out of ten boys began thinking about it and then at a later time made their definite or final decision.

Summary and Conclusions

The ministerial motivation study obtained information from 1,978 ministerial students, who came from forty-eight states and represented twenty denominations. These men were students in 57 theological schools and church-related colleges. It is believed that this group fairly and accurately represents the thinking of average ministerial students throughout the nation. The following points were established by the study:

1. The pastor, more than any other person, is the one who can influence young men to enter the ministry. In 34 per cent of the cases, the pastor's influence counted

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most. The problem of the shortage of ministers can be solved largely by interested pastors. The influence of the college teacher and the Sunday school teacher were disappointing. Much more could be done by these leaders. Although the young men became interested in the ministry during their high school years, their teachers gave them little help, except in 2.3 per cent of the cases.

2. Missionaries, who perhaps visit a church once a year, and evangelists, who seldom come, influence as many young men to enter the ministry as college teachers and Sunday school teachers combined, although the latter see them every week or perhaps every day. The missionary and the evangelist challenge young men to a new consecration and to a life of service.

3. The enlisting of more recruits for the ministry will probably not take place as a result of more meetings or more organizations, although these may help. The secret lies with the pastor and the parents. Wholesome religious life at home and an interested pastor will do most to recruit new ministers.

4. The factors that keep boys out of the ministry are not his girl friends, the low salary, or parental objection. Boys are staying out, in many cases, because no one is guiding them in. A third of them do not feel prepared. A fifth of them lack guidance. Another one-fifth are kept out because no one has told them that the church needs them, or they do not know enough about what a minister does. It sometimes seems that no one is seriously working at this job of guiding young men into the ministry.

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5. All seem to agree that God must call young men into the ministry. But we do not have enough ministers. This does not mean that God is neglecting his work. Rather, we are failing to help young men to interpret that call.

6. Most of the 1,978 ministerial candidates said their "call" was not a single event nor a sudden revelation, but rather it was a continuing educational process.

7. As a young man is led to see the need of men and society for Christ and is shown how he personally can serve mankind, he responds, that is, he accepts God's call.

8. Nearly two-thirds (63 per cent) of the young men became interested in the ministry before they were through high school. This entire task of recruitment is largely one for the church and the home. The age when this should be done is much younger than we are accustomed to thinking.

9. Ministerial students do not come only from exceptional parents or from homes of professional people. They come from the homes of farmers and tradesmen, factory workers and merchants. They come from the ordinary homes, like yours and mine.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed." (Luke 4:18)

